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Summer LOVIN'
OUR FAV MUST-WATCH MOVIES

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IT'S GREAT TO BE A MAN

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SUMMER LOVIN' MOVIES

Summer is a wonderful time, filled with late afternoon barbeques, trips to the beach and just a feel-good time all round. And as much as we celebrate summer, movies do the exact same. Some of the best movies out there embrace the warm colors of summer to bring us the best entertainment around. Every year we deliver you our favorite summer flicks, here is our updated list of must-watch summer movies in 2022.

Grease

The movie that inspired a generation and the movie that instilled the idea of the summer holiday romance. Even 44 years later, this feel-good flick still remains a classic. Australian good girl Sandy and greaser Danny fell in love over the summer. But when they unexpectedly discover they're now in the same high school, will they be able to rekindle their romance despite their eccentric friends? It's a movie that has been copied but never better and the songs are to this day some of the best put on screen. Times might have changed in 2022 but summer lovin' will always be welcomed in this all-time classic.

Point Break

The movie that made everyone want to become surfers in the early 90s is still to this day a classic film. With Patrick Swayze giving us one of his best performances as the surfer/bank robber Brodhi fighting against the system. In Los Angeles, a gang of bank robbers who call themselves The Ex-Presidents commit their crimes while wearing masks of Reagan, Carter, Nixon and Johnson. Believing that the members of the gang could be surfers, the F.B.I. sends young agent Johnny Utah to the beach undercover to mix with the surfers and gather information. Keanu Reeves is as lovable as ever in the role of Utah and this action-packed film still delivers after all this time. Guaranteed to make you long for the days of chilling on the beach with your buddies watching the sun go down on a glorious summer day. Just avoid the horrible 2015 remake.

E.T.

One of the greatest films of all time and arguably Steven Spielberg's grand opus, E.T. is a timeless film, in which one boy takes on the ultimate summer project of returning a strange visitor back to his home planet. E.T. is so popular that Netflix's Stranger Things borrowed so many elements from it wholesale, but with good reason. Nothing screams 80s summertime in the US than E.T. itself. Even if only because you watched it on repeat as a child, this one is sure to have you nostalgic for summers long-gone.

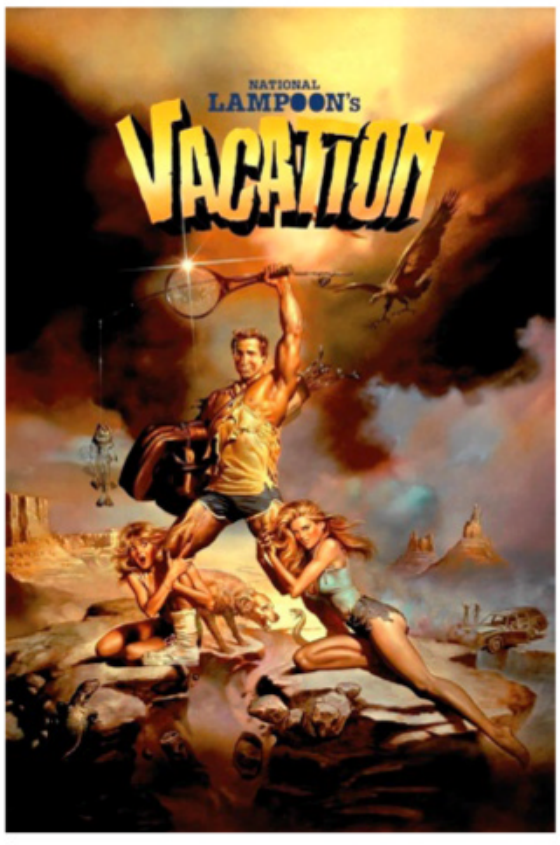
Adventureland

In the summer of 1987, a college graduate takes a 'nowhere' job at his local amusement park, only to find it's the perfect course to get him prepared for the real world. Starring Jesse Eisenberg and Kristen Stewart this coming-of-age film is in the same vein as Superbad and Knocked Up and creates that nostalgia for anyone working a crappy summer job. With a great soundtrack and a feel-good story, Adventureland is the perfect place to start to get that summer mood going.

Mamma Mia!

Yes, it's another musical on the list, but no one can deny the feel-good summer vibes of this rom-com set in the beautiful Greek summer scenery and lots of singing and dancing. An independent, single mother who owns a small hotel on a Greek island is about to marry off the spirited young daughter she's raised alone. But, the daughter has secretly invited three of her mother's ex-lovers in the hopes of finding her biological father. Pierce Brosnan and Meryl Streep shine in this updated Broadway play. If musicals are not to your liking then watch this with the sound off as even just the beautiful Greek vistas will brighten up your day.

National Lampoon's Vacation



Chevy Chase's second appearance on this list and arguably his best role ever. Clark Griswold was an 80's icon, a bumbling idiot who always seemed to get himself and his family into crazy situations. And in the days before the National Lampoon name became an absolute joke (not the good kind), National Lampoon's Vacation was a classic summer holiday movie. The Griswolds drive from Illinois to a California amusement park. Along the way, they run up against car problems, the death of a family member, and more, but the often unrealistic Clark is determined to give his family the perfect summer vacation. Regardless of how bad your summer holiday is, it could never be as bad as the Griswold's.

Caddyshack

ESPN once called this the funniest sports movie ever made and it's no wonder when you look at the star-studded comedic cast. Chevy Chase (before he went all weird), Rodney Dangerfield and Bill Murray deliver some of their best work in this whacky 80s comedy. At an exclusive country club, an ambitious young caddy, Danny Noonan, eagerly pursues a caddy scholarship in hopes of attending college and, in turn, avoiding a job at the lumber yard. In order to succeed, he must first win the favor of the elitist Judge Smails, and then the caddy golf tournament which Smails sponsors. The old saying of "they don't make them like this anymore" has never been more true when it comes to Caddyshack, a silly over-the-top comedy that will put a smile on your face.

Weekend at Bernie's

The 80s just did summer comedies right and with Weekend at Bernie's the classic run of good 80s summer vibes continue. Two friends are invited for a weekend to a luxury island with their boss. The boss gets killed and nobody seems to notice, except for the two friends. In order not to become suspects of murder they treat the body as a puppet and make people believe he's still alive. The killer wants to do his job so when he is informed that the stiff is still alive he's got to shoot him again, and again, and again. The premise is as silly as one can get, but isn't that the magic of summer?

Jaws

When Spielberg's first feature film came out, it sent panic throughout real-life America as people quickly changed their summer beach trip plans. Even though the panic resided through the years, Jaws still remains one of the greatest movies of all time and set off a streak of copycat "killer animal" films. IT features amazing performances from Richard Dreyfuss and Robert Shaw and is still one of the creepiest movies to watch on a summer night on your beach holiday. Yes, the shark looks as fake as can be, but the tension and drama this film creates has yet to be recreated over 40 years later.

Forgetting Sarah Marshall

When Sarah Marshall dumps aspiring musician Peter Bretter for rock star Aldous Snow, Peter's world comes crashing down. His best friend suggests that Peter should get away from everything and to fly off to Hawaii to escape all his problems. After arriving in Hawaii and meeting the beautiful Rachel Jansen, Peter is shocked to see not only Aldous Snow in Hawaii, but also Sarah Marshall. Starring Jason Segel as the down-on-his-luck Peter, Forgetting Sarah Marshall is a wonderful comedy set to the backdrop of some of the best summer scenery Hawaii has to offer. And don't miss out on the fantastic Russel Brand as the sleazy rock star Aldous Snow.

Dirty Dancing

Nobody puts a baby in the corner and nobody can perfect this all-time classic dancing-inspired love story. Patrick Swayze and Jennifer Grey deliver fantastic turns as star-crossed lovers Johnny Castle and Baby. The dancing is epic and the soundtrack is an all-time classic. Expecting the usual tedium that accompanies a summer in the Catskills with her family, 17-year-old Frances 'Baby' Houseman is surprised to find herself stepping into the shoes of a professional hoofer and unexpectedly falling in love. I challenge anyone not to get into it during the final dramatic dance scene, it's impossible. Of course, as with most classic 80's films, it received a ramke in 2017 that was dreadful. Stick with the classics kid.

Stand By Me

Arguably one of Stephen King's best adapted to movie novels stars a young Will Wheaton, River Phoenix and Keither Sutherland is one of the greatest coming of age stories ever told. Gordon "Gordie" Lachance reads in the newspaper that his friend Chris Chambers has died. This takes us to a flashback to the summer of 1959, when Gordie, Chris, and their friends were 12 years old and went looking for the body of a missing boy in Castle Rock, Oregon. Along their journey, they meet more challenges than they could have anticipated and all do a lot of growing up. Stand By Me perfectly captures the innocence of young boys going on adventures out into the wild.

I Know What You Did Last Summer

We've all done stupid things during our summer holidays, that's what summer holidays are all about. But when you accidentally kill a man and try to hide the evidence, then you've gone too far perhaps. And that's exactly what happened to the teens of I Know What You Did Last Summer. As they celebrate their high school graduation, four friends are involved in a hit-and-run accident when their car hits and apparently kills a pedestrian on an isolated roadway. They dispose of the body and vow to keep the incident a secret, a year later somebody starts sending them letters bearing the warning "I Know What You Did Last Summer". The 90s was filled with slasher movies, yet this one was one of the best.

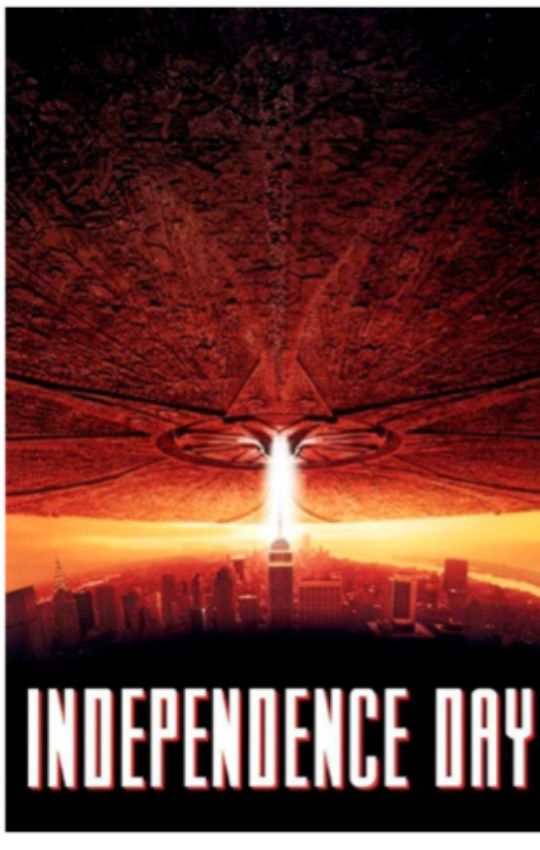
Clueless

Anyone growing up in the 90's will have very fond memories of Clueless. The prototype for Mean Girls many years later. Cher has everything a high school girl in a '90s movie could want: She's popular, rich and has access to all the cutest clothes. When a new girl named Tai moves to town and starts school with Cher in Beverly Hills, Cher decides to make Tai her social project. Soon, this plan backfires when Tai becomes more popular than Cher and falls in love with Cher's college-age ex-stepbrother, Josh , just when Cher realizes she also has a major crush on him. If anything, you should watch this movie to see a young Paul Rudd, purely to prove that the man doesn't age at all.

Little Miss Sunshine

Nothing says summer adventure more than a roadtrip across the country and in Little Miss Sunshine the road trip takes center stage. When Olive learns she has qualified for the Little Miss Sunshine pageant in Redondo Beach, California, the whole family makes a road trip from their home in New Mexico. The dysfunctional group go on a road trip to help Olive accomplish her dream, but, along the way, they all end up coming together as a family in ways that anyone who meets them might deem impossible. Look out for a wonderful dramatic turn by none other than Steve Carrel, proving he is not just a funny man, but can also convey some serious emotion.

Independence Day



Not all summer mood movies are about finding oneself or traveling to foreign countries. Some movies like Independence day like to throw in some alien invading, Will Smith ass kicking action to liven up your summer. On July 2, a giant alien mothership enters orbit around Earth and deploys several dozen saucer-shaped 'destroyer' spacecraft that quickly lay waste to major cities around the planet. On July 3, the United States conducted a coordinated counterattack that failed. On July 4, a plan was devised to gain access to the interior of the alien mothership in space, in order to plant a nuclear missile. It's loud, it's over the top and has loads of action, exactly what ever summer should have. It's just missing a slap or two.

Taylor Ekman

Model @taylorekman
Photographer Kevin Talley | @KevinTalleyPhoto
HMUA Misty Loggie | @mistyhmua

Such an absolute honor to have you on FHM! What are your plans this year? This year I am focused on spending time with family and friends. After two years of limited travel due to COVID, I am hoping to explore new cities alongside friends and family! I also am bringing home a new puppy in September. I can't wait!

What are you most looking forward to this year? Traveling! So far, I have New York, Kiawah Island, Jamaica, Florida, and Hilton Head on the docket! I can't wait to add more to the list!

Top 3 best moments of your career? One of the coolest moments in modeling for me was actually going with my baby brother to watch him sign with a modeling agency in NYC. It was such a proud moment! Another top moment as a model would be my first shoot. What a hysterical moment to look back on – I was so nervous! And no, those pictures will not see the light of day. #awkward. Lastly, when I was given the opportunity to be featured in FHM, duh!

What would you say is your signature look? A matching athletic set and a fresh pair of Nikes!

What is the fastest way to get a smile on your face? A nice, full glass of Cabernet! Don't judge.

What are some of your favorite outdoor activities? I love to hike! Growing up in North Carolina, I had access to some of the most beautiful mountains! If there is a good view, count me in!

3 ultimate deal-breakers when it comes to men? Being rude to waiters. Arrogance. You better be nice to your momma too!

Never have I ever... Gambled in a casino.

Top 3 myth busters when it comes to models? We are only our looks. Some of the most intelligent people I know also model! We don't have "real jobs". Not only is modeling a real job, we also often work full-time jobs in addition to modeling! We don't eat. You would be shocked at how many chips I can throw down at a Mexican restaurant!

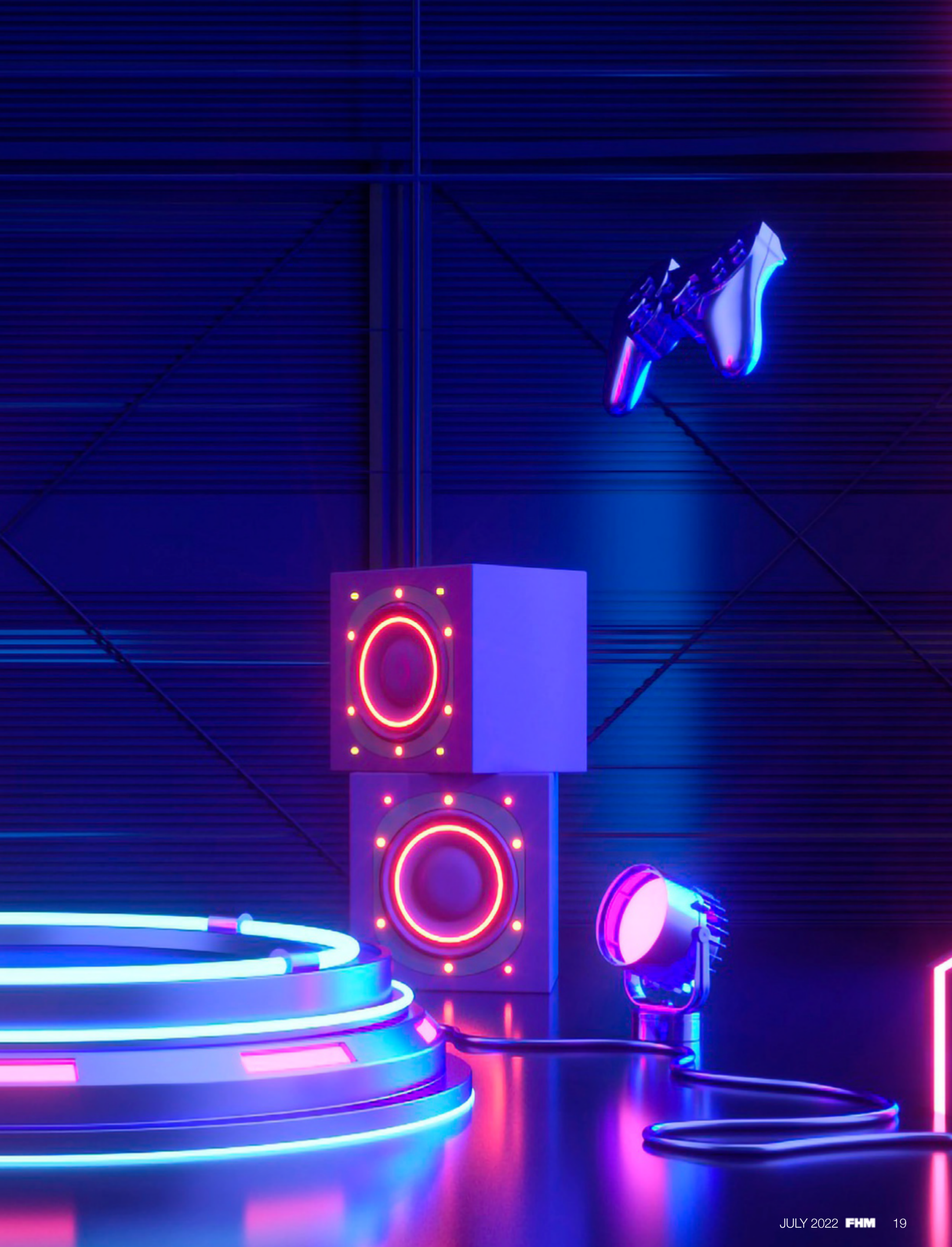
What is the best way to approach you as an admirer? Be normal, haha.

Where can our readers catch up with you and stay updated with your work? I stay most active on Instagram! Find me @ taylorekman.

We are so happy to have gotten to know you a little bit! Any last words out there for our readers? I would say, if any of you are ever on the fence about starting a new career or diving into a new endeavor, never let age deter you. It is never too late to try something new. Better to try and fail than to never fail at all!

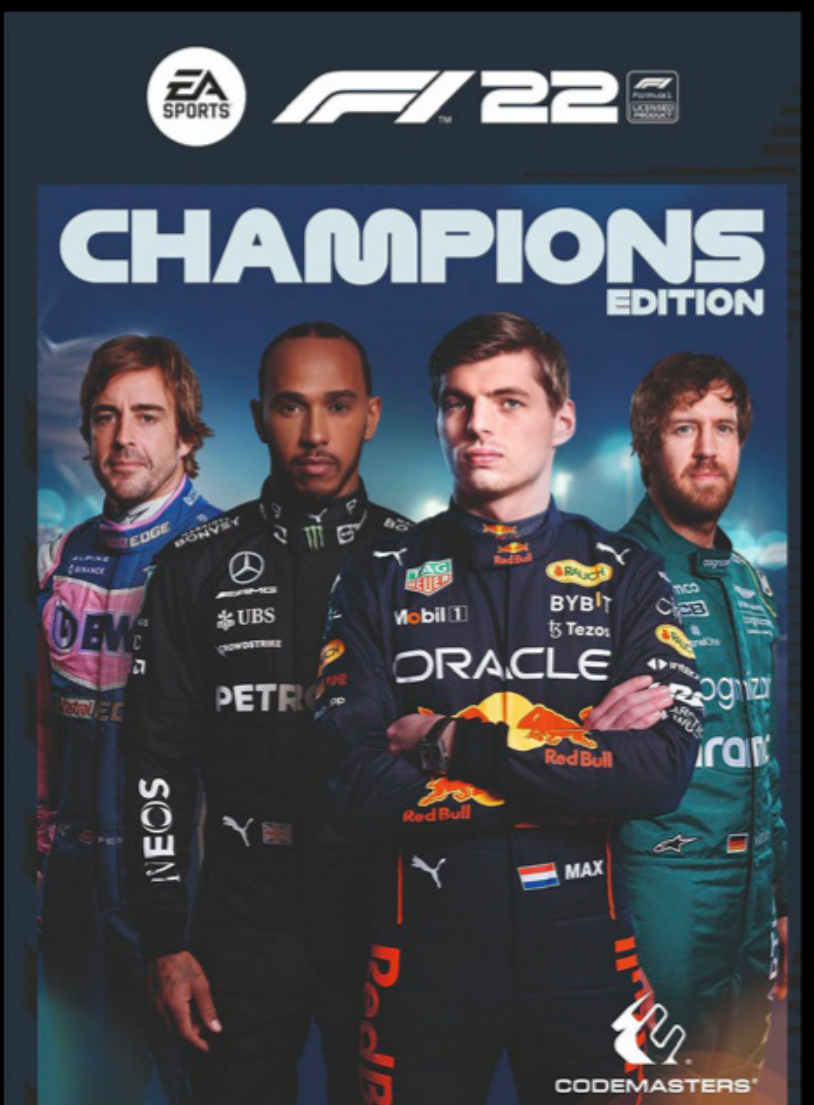
JAMMING ONLINE

The best games to play now!



F1 22

So far in 2022, we've seen quite the change in the F1 landscape, with brand new regulations as well as Ferrari returning to the top. So of course the brand new F1 game from Codemasters this year has also seen its biggest revamp in years. This is also the first year where new Codemasters owners EA has a big say on the final game. Yet the biggest question is, will this year's iteration of the world's most famous motorsport live up to the hype that its real-life counterparts have delivered so far?



New Look, New Rules

As is the norm in the majority of EA SPORTS yearly sports titles, expect to see all the latest car designs and liveries to match the real-life cars, but the biggest change from the gameplay is the new handling model that accurately replicates the feel of driving these new exciting F1 cars. If you're an F1 game regular you'll immediately notice the difference in handling, which is a most welcome change and challenge. You'll also see all 23 F1 circuits featured, including the brand new Miami International Autodrome, with its iconic palm trees and 19 challenging corners. All of the tracks have a minor graphical overhaul to ensure that the tracks are as up-to-date as possible. Another big addition is that of the Sprint races being added to 6 of the official tracks, now you can compete race weekends as officially as possible as the Sprint races adds an extra challenge to the race weekend. Although in career mode you will be limited to only the official sprint race options, in other modes you have the option to add a sprint race to your race weekend on any of the 23 tracks. New broadcasts options have been added as well to bring you closer to the full F1 TV experiences, including the formation lap that can be viewed as it would be on TV or you can participate in the formation lap yourself, with an added mini-game when you park your car in the correct start position. It's a nice touch and adds to the drama of the sport. Pit stops have also a similar option, where you can choose between broadcast or participation, with the latter giving you a mini-game to make sure you get the best possible pit stop out there, but mess it up and you'll lose valuable seconds. For people that loved the story mode Braking Point in last year's game, will be disappointed as there is no story mode this year, instead it's been replaced by F1 Life, a new space for you to unlock and show off supercars, clothing, accessories, and more for the world to see. Currently, it feels a bit superficial and an opportunity for EA to press home micro-transactions, but we will see in time what they have planned

for this new mode.

Overall F1 22 is another great F1 simulation, although many might be disappointed with some of Codemasters decisions on certain game modes. If you're an F1 fanatic then you'll find enough here to keep you racing throughout the season, especially with the MyTeam mode also receiving minor changes like custom liveries etc. F1 22 is a very good racing game that just falls short of being the ultimate F1 game.

Salt & Sacrifice

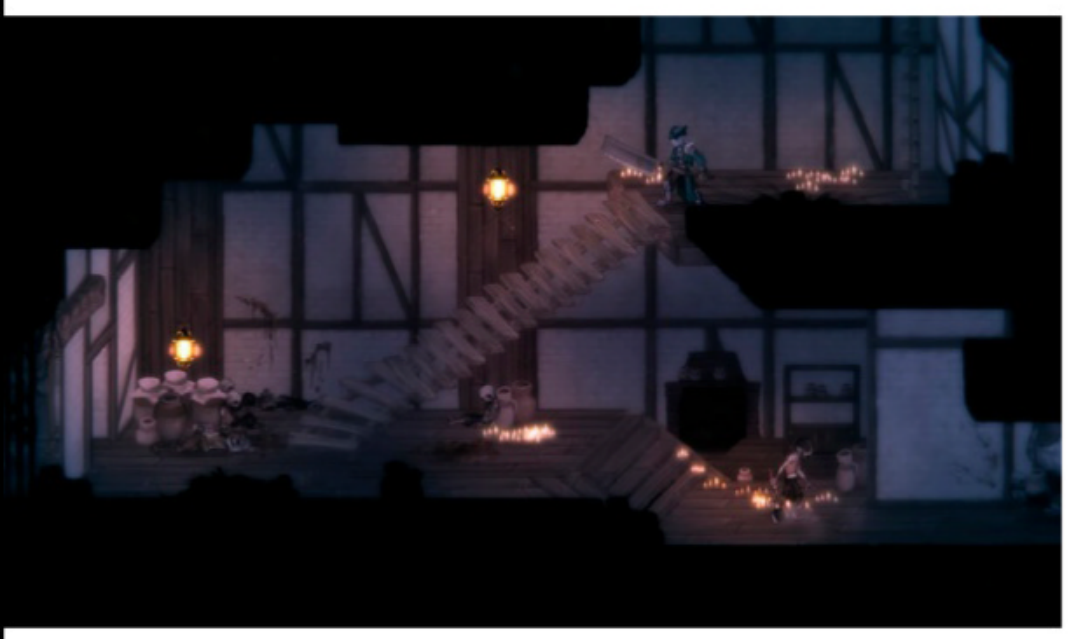
After the enormous success of Elden Ring, many of us will be looking for that next Soulsborne fix, and Salt and Sacrifice being the perfect game to jump into after you've had your share of The Lands Between. For those that missed the 2016 Salt and Sanctuary, the game is a 2D side scroller that captures everything that made the Soulsborne games so good. A variety of classes with loads of weapons and armor, set in a mysterious world where everything wants to rip your head off. Salt and Sacrifice, the second game in the series continues this tradition but throws in elements from Capcom's Monster Hunter for good measure to deliver a game unlike any other.

Death Will Be Your Friend

In Salt and Sacrifice, you are a Marked Inquisitor, you'll journey through the western frontier: pursuing, hunting, and obliterating the Mages that roam the realm. Craft unique weapons and armor from the otherworldly flesh and bones of the Mages you destroy. A once-peaceful kingdom is plunged into chaos by encroaching tides of Mages, merciless embodiments of elemental chaos. The Marked Inquisitors, a doomed force of the condemned, once again mobilizes to stand against the existential threat of Magic. A buried secret threatens to bring an ancient empire to utter ruin. In a land plagued by powerful and twisted Mages, the condemned Marked Inquisitors take up the hunt. Much like the games Salt and Sacrifice are based on, you're given tons of unique weapons and armor to craft throughout your adventure, each providing the opportunity for you to improve your character and make taking down the mages slightly easier. Each mage successfully hunted down will give you powerful crafting items to customize your character and weapons. It's a fun upgrade system that might seem daunting in the early hours of the game, but towards the end you'll be a mage murdering machine. The world itself is massive with various hub worlds making up the map as you traverse the vast open spaces filled with scavengers, secrets, traps, and powerful guardians. Although slightly confusing when you start off, the world itself is a puzzle for you to figure out, you'll eventually know each area like the back of hand, especially when you've unlocked the numerous shortcuts and late-game abilities. The combat itself might not be as detailed or intricate as an Elden Ring or Monster Hunter, yet it still maintains a steady challenge throughout. Salt and Sacrifice also includes a

PVP element, and although quite similar to invasions in Elden Ring, it does have a unique feature where you can kill enemies to create your own "monster" to help take down other PVP players. It's a lot of fun and definitely adds to the overall experience.

Salt and Sacrifice is a worthy successor to its 2016 older sibling and fans of the first game will find a lot to love here. If you've just come off Elden Ring, it might take some time to adjust to the side-scrolling action of Salt and Sacrifice, but once you click you'll have hours upon hours of Mage hunting fun. Salt and Sacrifice is a cracking game and one of the surprise hits of the year so far.



R
SONY

Silence is *Golden*

For years now the battle for the premium noise-canceling headset has been hotting up. With Sony leading the charge others have caught up with the Japanese giants. Apple's recent Airpods Max headphones were excellent and Bose's update to their legendary Quiet Comfort range has made the competition even more fierce. But has Sony just revealed the best ever noise-canceling headset with their update to their still impressive WH-1000XM4 headphones from 2020? Spoiler warning: the answer is yes.

Difference is slight, yet significant

Throughout the last few years, Sony has changed the game when they released their award-winning WH-1000XM3 and WH-1000XM4's onto the world. For years Bose was the king of silence, but Sony stole that title away from its main competitor with some excellent cans. Now in 2022 Sony is set to keep that crown with the release of the WH-1000XM5, yes Sony does need to work a bit on their naming for these. So the question is, what sets these apart from their predecessor? Well in terms of specs and performance they mostly do the same as the iteration before, just better. The first thing fans of the Sony cans will notice is the new slick design, this first visual upgrade in years and a welcome one. After two generations of largely-identical over-ear headphone designs, the WH-1000XM5 headphones are a significant departure from their predecessors. The best way to describe the WH-1000XM5 headphones is that they're a bit curvier than their predecessors. It's all a bit tidier, a bit sleeker and a bit more modern. Sadly once again they are not water-resistant but that is a minor query. Yet the new design means they cannot fold into itself as per the previous models which make them slightly less portable than before. Fortunately, that's where the bad news stops, as the new design is more comfortable, allowing for hours upon hours of usage without getting that typical headphone fatigue. There's ample padding around the ears, and the cups twist and pivot to suit all sizes, with just the right amount of clamp pressure exerted from the band to keep them in place without squeezing or hurting your head. That headband now smoothly extends too, rather than using the stepped extension of earlier versions. The controls on the cups themselves haven't changed much either, with the smart touch context-aware auto controls present, there are also two physical buttons, one that cycles between noise canceling and ambient aware settings and the second is the power button that also stands in for the Bluetooth pairing. Anyone that has owned a WH-1000 model before will feel right at home. The USB-C charging port and 3.5mm headphone jack is also present as per previous models. The new redesign is not only for looks though, it actually plays two crucial roles in delivering the ultimate headphone experience. First being the curvier design allows for wind-drag reduction, which eliminates that annoying distortion when out and about on a windy day. The second is the doubling of the microphones points housed in the headphones. This provides the onboard noise-canceling processors more audio data to analyze and improve active noise canceling performance with, as well as doubling the amount of beamforming mics near a user's mouth for calls up from two on the WH-1000XM4s to four on the WH-1000XM5s, massively improving call quality.

Fortunately, even with all these additions, these headphones are actually lighter than the previous model, as well as using ABS plastics that are made of recycled car parts. So not only is your new headphones lighter, they are also eco-friendly. Yet the biggest question still remains, are they better at noise canceling than the WH-1000XM4 model? The simple answer is yes, the more complicated answer is yes, but only slightly. The WH-1000XM4 already effectively wiped out low-frequency sounds, but the XM5's work harder at the higher frequency zone. That's in part thanks to the new 30mm driver design that, while smaller than the 40mm design of old, makes use of a high rigidity dome and soft edge to take some of the bite off of higher-pitched sounds. What this means is that now your new pair of headphones are even better at canceling

SONY

out the noise from outside, something we must say did not expect as the WH-1000XM4 was already excellent in this category. Of course, noise canceling isn't the only trick up the pony's sleeve. Location Awareness is back and better than ever, with the headphones being able to learn your daily routines and automatically adjust the settings without you having to do anything. If the headphones spot that you're sitting still at home, they might jump to a less intense level of noise cancellation compared to while you're sitting in the office, based on your preferences. And if you're out for a walk, it may pipe in more exterior audio to keep you safe while crossing the street. A more immediately useful and intuitive feature is the fact the WH-1000XM5's will automatically pause audio when removed from your head, thanks to a hidden sensor in the ear cup. Leave them off for a little longer, and they'll automatically switch off completely, saving your battery life. You've also got the option of connecting to two devices at once, switching between the two depending on what's happening on each, such as to prioritize a notification.

Worth the Upgrade?

There is no question that the new WH-1000XM5 is without a doubt the best noise-canceling headphone on the market, improving in almost every department. Yet if you own a pair of WH-1000XM4's then the upgrades might not be as significant as you would've hoped, considering the new pair comes in more expensive than the previous model. So if you own a pair of Sony's then you might want to hold off for now. However, if you're in the market for new active noise-canceling headphones then it's a very easy decision to make, the Sony WH-1000XM5 are the best in the business and will guarantee you hours of wonderful, wonderful silence.

FINDING RELIGION

IN A FOOTBALL SHIRT.

By Ian Kirke | Twitter @ianjkirke

Confusion can be irritating, infuriating, and isolating. On the flipside, celebrating uncertainty – whilst acknowledging that a lack of answers can be temporarily debilitating – can often lead to exciting discovery and personal growth. Not wishing to sound too much like a motivational speaker, I nonetheless confess that not knowing what I don't know is generally a wonderful opportunity to slay the dragon of ignorance. I write about things that have puzzled, surprised, and overwhelmed me!

Religion has stumped me for most of my adult life, and now seems as good a time as ever to understand why.

Apologies for the gobbledygook in advance but I believe that I don't believe. Since belief is a fundamental part of religion, I think that this clumsy definition of my present position accurately frames my confusion. Logically, since I don't believe – and evidence of this stance will follow – I suspect this makes me an atheist, yet I celebrate religious festivals, got married in church, and make a beeline to sacred places when I travel the world. So on reflection, does this make me a confused agnostic? To add to the turmoil, I do believe that I have faith. A faith that is so strong that it has been an integral part of me since I was a kid. A faith that has shaped my view on life, what I do with it (especially on a Saturday) and how I spend my money – often for little return. My enduring faith is wrapped up in my football team – Notts County – a team that has fallen so rapidly from grace that I often question why I keep the faith, when despair and disappointment are the usual outcomes. However, I keep the faith season after season. I guess most people don't get it. It's more than just a game. My roots, my rock, memories, especially of my late dad, and what could have been. The latter is more about choice – exercised as a youngster – when I chose the black and white stripes over our red neighbors across the river Trent who, let's say, have enjoyed significantly more on-field success, notably from around about the time I became an ardent Notts fan.

This disclosure, although cathartic, wasn't moving me any further forward on my quest to solve the riddle of religion. I needed help. Following a series of rejections, false trails and patiently waiting – all the hallmarks of the initial stages of confusion – I held out, and sure enough fate (or maybe persistence) led me to pastor and bible teacher Ron Bailey. I knew the path of inquiry I wanted to follow but first, I

wanted to know about his journey.

Born in the Potteries of Stoke-on-Trent, half a mile from Vale Park – the home of Port Vale – Ron quipped, "We could clearly hear when they scored!" An easy tap-in for me – "So not often then!" Ron regained the lead – "Lots of us grew up thinking the club's full name was Port Vale Nil!" We had broken the ice.

Unlike my journey though, Ron's football heritage pretty much ended in his formative years although his brother remains a passionate Vale fan to this day. Funny how commitment can touch and take hold, or was it that both his brother and I needed to be committed given the respective endearing underdog status of both teams. Yet Ron was moved in a different direction, even though it wasn't immediate.

"My father was a precision tool maker, and my mother was a freehand painter in the potteries. We had no church connections. Apart from one Sunday school class I never went to church. At grammar school, we had religious education lessons. Shortly afterward I was confirmed. I had been baptized as a baby but that wasn't of any significance to me. Like you, I was, and continue to be, curious." I reflected for a moment. I had witnessed many a crying baby being christened in church and wondered if this religious grab was evidence of early indoctrination. Although, from my own experiences, the ceremonies seemed nonetheless right even if I was less convinced by the divinity deed. Ron continued.

"I don't think there was ever a time in my life that I didn't believe in God. I don't know where that came from. It was just an assumption that there was a God and I prayed at night." Joining the choir Ron "absorbed" the lifestyle of the Anglican Church although he was keen to add, "It was almost like a spectator

sport. I looked and learned but I didn't think there was anything expected of me. This all changed when I saw a Billy Graham film based on his Harringay Crusader. I responded to his message realizing that Christ had died for me. If the bible was true, he paid the penalty for my sins and that required a response from me. If someone saved your life you don't just walk away." Was there a similarity of belief in both of our journeys? A significant trigger point that mapped out a lifetime of conviction? Without the intervention of my dad at that precise moment in my life who knows how different my future would have been. My Notts County journey had been significant and like Ron, I just couldn't walk away.

Following a career principally in the corporate world of finance, Ron spent three years at bible college before becoming a pastor and preaching in over twenty countries. Now a local elder at the New Covenant Christ Church in Bracknell, his commitment to serving God has spanned sixty years.

Can you have faith without religion?

Smiling, Ron responded, "Yes, I think you can to a degree. I have faith without religion." Well, I wasn't expecting that! He continued, "I belong to a non-conformist church. There are no rituals, I don't know what saint's days are when and I don't do anything for lent." This guy was a rebel!

"But I am interested in religion, and I think it says something else. There is a verse in that obscure book in the bible – Ecclesiastes – 'God has put eternity in their hearts,' and it is my conviction that human beings are interested in their origins and ultimate destiny." This observation echoed my calling. Notts embodied my origins and Meadow Lane was often my retreat when life threw a curve ball at me. A place where I could be in a crowd but, if I chose to be, alone in my thoughts. Our ultimate destiny? Back into the English Football League and the reclaiming of our place in history – the oldest football league club in the world! Ron added, "This notion is expressed in other religions, but there is some seed which needs, I think, a point of reference and I don't think that is an accident."

Ron added, "I also think we have an instinctive moral code – not that we necessarily obey it. The conscience is like a spiritual smoke alarm. When it goes off the body reacts to it." I had lost count of the times that I had experienced that feeling and Ron's metaphor was uncannily accurate.

"Putting all of these things side by side I have an instinct to ask the question 'why?' One of the failures of modern-day culture and science, with which I am fascinated, focuses upon the question of 'how?' I am interested in space, time, and particle physics but these disciplines never ask the question 'why?' I know that there are animals that make tools, so that doesn't make humanity unique, but I don't know of any that have a sense of their origins, curiosity, or sense of destiny."

Returning to my earlier disclosure Ron accepted the challenge – "You say you are a confused agnostic. Amongst scientists, there are very few that would call themselves atheists. Indeed, when the Atheist Society put up slogans on buses even they were forced to say – 'there is probably no God.'"

There are several religions in the world. Are they all correct or are some further up the league?

"They can't all be correct. Logically you cannot have two opposing statements which deny one another, and they both be right. Logically they could both be wrong." I found this disclosure refreshingly candid but confusing too, although I had little measure since I wasn't familiar with any religion save a smattering of Christianity by reason of birth. However, Ron did concede that there were important insights in almost all religions.

"I am a Bible Christian and my first point of reference – my ultimate court of appeal – is the Bible." He then outlined the construction of the scriptures using terms I had heard of but never fully understood. "It contains two separate books – the Old Testament or Covenant and the New Covenant. Two

occasions in which God entered into a unique and reciprocal relationship with disciples creating a sense of belonging. The New Covenant is a new bond with God made possible through Jesus Christ."

"For me, there is another kind of proof of the general trustworthiness of the scriptures. War brings out the worst and best in people. I've been to Auschwitz twice and cried my way through the place. An unbelievable horror." Ron then untangled humanity from the rest of the animal kingdom, which only slaughter for food or protection, by acknowledging that we are the only species who kill for dominance, leading him to the conclusion that there is something inherently defective within our genetic makeup. "I believe that is what the Bible calls a sin."

Using a powerful modern-day descriptor Ron reflected upon the Lord of the Rings author J.R.R. Tolkien – a catholic – in which one of the infamous rings was dedicated to the human desire for power. Given the dysfunctional prowess of mortals Ron pondered a recent news report about the use of drones. "I was watching a piece about the use of drones for getting help to isolated people. Then a later newsfeed carried a story about the same technology being used in warfare." Ron's conviction was that this craving of power was a uniquely human characteristic, before concluding, "The Bible is, in my opinion, the only thing that tries to give an answer to this dilemma."

I have two incredible children and once had a beautiful wife. She died of cancer at fifty. Why should anyone turn to religion when they lose a loved one so early in their life, let alone a child?

"That is the ultimate question and there are no slick answers to that one." I remained passive. My silence was intentional – I wanted to Ron to fill this vast void that had left me icy cold towards the notion of a benevolent God let alone any religion that could stand up to this level of scrutiny.

"I start from the opposite side of that question." He paused before adding the most horrific personal experience, "I lost my son to a drowning incident in South Africa when he was twenty-two. He was brilliant. Having been to Oxford he had just accepted a full scholarship to Harvard." Ron didn't have to, but he continued, "We have seven children. My daughter, in her mid-forties, is profoundly handicapped. She only has two words, "Hello" and "Apple," I think because her name is Abigail, and she possibly thinks her name is Apple. I am not without pain. I haven't breezed through life."

My clumsy attempt to spark some form of sanctimonious bidding in the grief stakes was humbly disassembled by Ron who elegantly summarised my original position as – if this is how God behaves how can I believe? Indeed, why would I want to believe? Spot on. Pray continue.

sharpes
of
nottingham

Returning to his unequivocal faith Ron concluded that God's love was beyond explanation or description. "Why did this happen to me? I don't know. But I believe that one day I will and, in the meantime, I trust – another word for faith – in God."

Although disappointed that this revelation left a chasm of conjecture, for a brief moment I felt envious. Having recently attended the funeral of a friend's son I couldn't disentangle my own reflected grief in attempting to answer the terrible question – what if this happened to me? How could I process it? And would the rest of my life be dedicated to this impossible question at the expense of everything else that is important and beautiful in my life? Being able not to make sense and to await an answer had its obvious benefits. Yet I couldn't shake off the sense of frustration in not knowing the answer.

Ron, no doubt sensing my anxiety, brought a welcome modicum of levity, "You speak of having faith in Notts County. Faith is when you put your whole weight behind something. Putting all of your eggs in one basket." Then he asked me a fundamental question, "Would you risk your life on Notts?" Of course not was my response. "Then you have hope in Notts – which is nonetheless legitimate – even if it is a hopeless hope." He had seen our latest result, hadn't he?

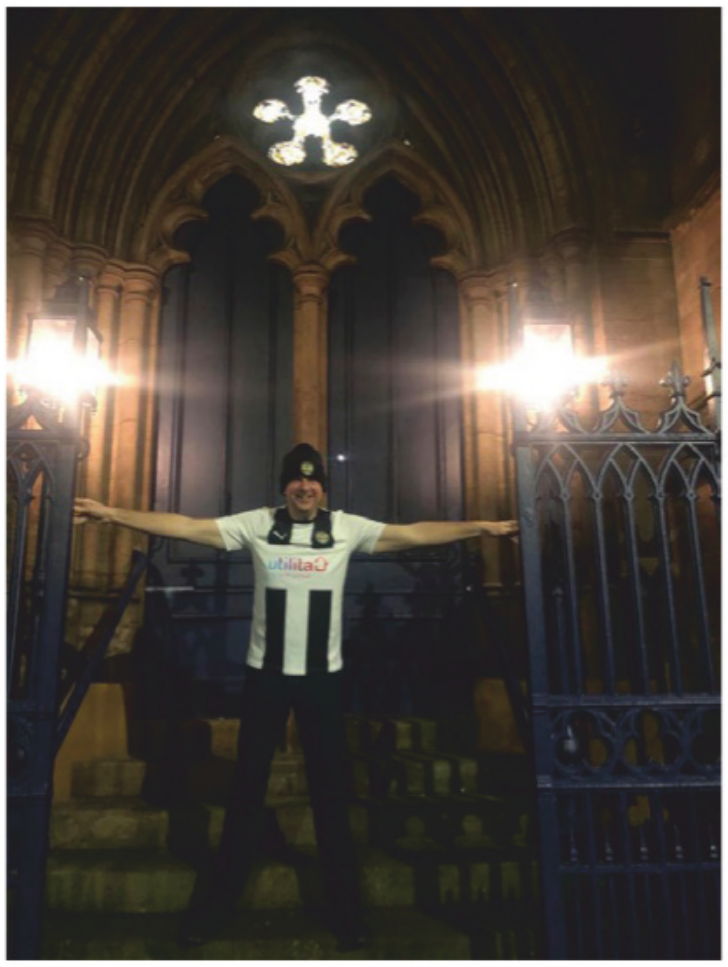
How do you respond to the Karl Marx quote, "Religion is the opium of the people"?
Ron immediately stumped me, since I thought this statement would catch him off-guard. I was utterly wrong! "I think there is a lot of truth in what he said."

He continued, "This is why I don't think of myself as being religious. Often religion is another expression of power, used to control people."

Returning to his Christian faith Ron qualified his assertion, "At its heart, Christianity is a relationship between two people – the one who needs saving and the one who is the savior. You cannot apply that doctrine to the masses." Ron declared that sometimes that power had to be confronted.

Providing a poignant example, Ron spoke of the not-so-glorious days of the British Raj on the Indian subcontinent which nonetheless prohibited the Hindu custom of burning widows on the funeral pyre of their deceased husbands.

I was keen to push this philosophical inquiry further and remind Ron of the legendary presumption contained within The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy, a wonderfully irreverent science fiction series created by Douglas Adams, first aired on BBC radio in 1978, that



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went something like this – to believe in God you need faith, whereupon as God appears the need for faith immediately ceases resulting in God disappearing in a puff of logic. Ron smiled and nodded his head eagerly in response, acknowledging the cleverness of this observation.

"I would want to examine what he means by logic because you cannot disprove the existence of God by logic. It is not possible in logic to prove the non-existence of something. That is an axiom of logic." As I mulled over this apparently convincing retort Ron had me smiling again, "It's an interesting anomaly to me as to why so many people who say they are atheists, like the actor and broadcaster Stephen Fry, for example, get angry about something they don't believe in!" I guess that was me told!

Isn't religion just like football – our cultural heritage often preordains what we should believe, and like football, we generally keep to one team throughout our lives?

I reasserted this statement by reminding Ron that as a youngster I had a stark choice – Notts County or Nottingham Forest and some would argue that I made the wrong decision. But then again, I had stayed loyal since. My supplementary question followed, asking Ron to consider the simplicity of unwavering allegiance, and querying why those that didn't believe in religion were often, for example, destined to exist in purgatory – rather like the National League?

Finding it difficult to disguise his amusement at this analogy Ron responded in his usual effervescent manner, "Of course, I don't believe in purgatory because there is no trace of that in the biblical revelations – that is a Catholic dogma." I stood corrected!

"I think that for some people football is a religion. It consumes them. A thing of passion." I was clear that Notts County had not consumed me, but I couldn't argue with the second-half of his match analysis.

"I am interested in so many things; however, the Bible is a unique book because it finds me where I am – it really speaks to me. There are other books with amazing insights but, in my opinion, the Bible does this so consistently – and this reliability makes it believable."

In summing up his conjecture Ron disclosed a fascinating insight into his logic – "So I believed, then I thought about things with strict logic and having made a leap of faith then it is only logical to me that I want to know God and serve him. Thus, my God does not disappear in a puff of logic!"

"Atheist, Professor Alice Roberts, has written a book called 'The Little Book of Humanism' that proposes that the key questions we need to ask are the 'how' ones. I believe this is a denial of human nature as we are innately curious about things." We are – and I am! Perhaps I have reconnected with my childhood need to ask the question "why," a phrase so consistently and often annoyingly uttered by my own children during their formative years. I had to admit that these early years were probably the best years of my life and writing had given me a second chance to pose those spectacularly innocent and thought-provoking questions.

Returning to his earlier admission of his avid interest in particle physics Ron concluded with a joke, "An atheist and God were having a conversation when the former declared, 'We don't need you anymore since we have all of the answers. We know exactly what happened as a result of the big bang. If we have the right dirt ultimately we will be able to create life!' God simply replied, 'Get your own dirt!'"

I began this journey with a certainty that religion and God were things that don't logically exist. I met Ron and found that we shared many of the same attributes

– a spirit of curiosity, a frequency to ask the question "why" and a keen sense of humour. Although our individual trigger points at which we discovered our own interpretations of faith vary, our conviction was not that much different. However, I am still to be convinced of many things – and that isn't a bad position to be in. I also discovered that God was alive and kicking in Ron, as is my faith that in the not too distant future Notts County will be back where they belong – in the English Football League!

FHM

BIKINI READY!

Sara Blake

Model @thesarablake
Photographer Joey P | @joeyp.photo_gallery | @joeyp.photo

FHM
THIS SIDE DOWN
ESTE LADO ABAJO
SPACE ALL EDGES
SEPARAR TODOS
LOS BORDES

Such an absolute honor to have you on FHM! What are you currently working on? Ever since I was a little girl this has been a dream. I have so many projects I've been working on that are being released soon! I can't wait to start my weekly bikini football predictions again.

What is your idea of a really good time? I love day drinking, a good football tailgate, being out on a boat, hockey games, and anything that gets my adrenaline going.

Top 3 best moments of your career? This is definitely one of them, especially being a mom, and getting a chance to still be a sexy version of myself. Next would have to be my features with outkick the coverage and being recognized as a TENNESSEE Vols fan. The third would have to be my podcast interview with Coach Jason Brown. Any opportunity I have in the sports industry is a huge highlight for me.

What would you say is your signature look? I'm most known for my Daisy dukes, blonde hair, and bikinis! I'm basically the female kid rock mixed with a little Dolly!

What is the fastest way to get a smile on your face? I am always smiling and laughing, it really isn't hard to get to my heart as long as you're making me laugh.

What are some of your favorite outdoor activities? I have a farm so I'm constantly outside riding around my 6 acres on my ATV or laying out by the pool. I love riding around in my jeep with the top off, and listening to music in my bikini.

3 ultimate deal-breakers when it comes to men? You have to know your football, can't be a fair-weather/bandwagon fan. You have to be able to get dirty and be good with your hands. And if you're not outgoing, it'll never work. I basically just described my husband so if you're not him, sorry.

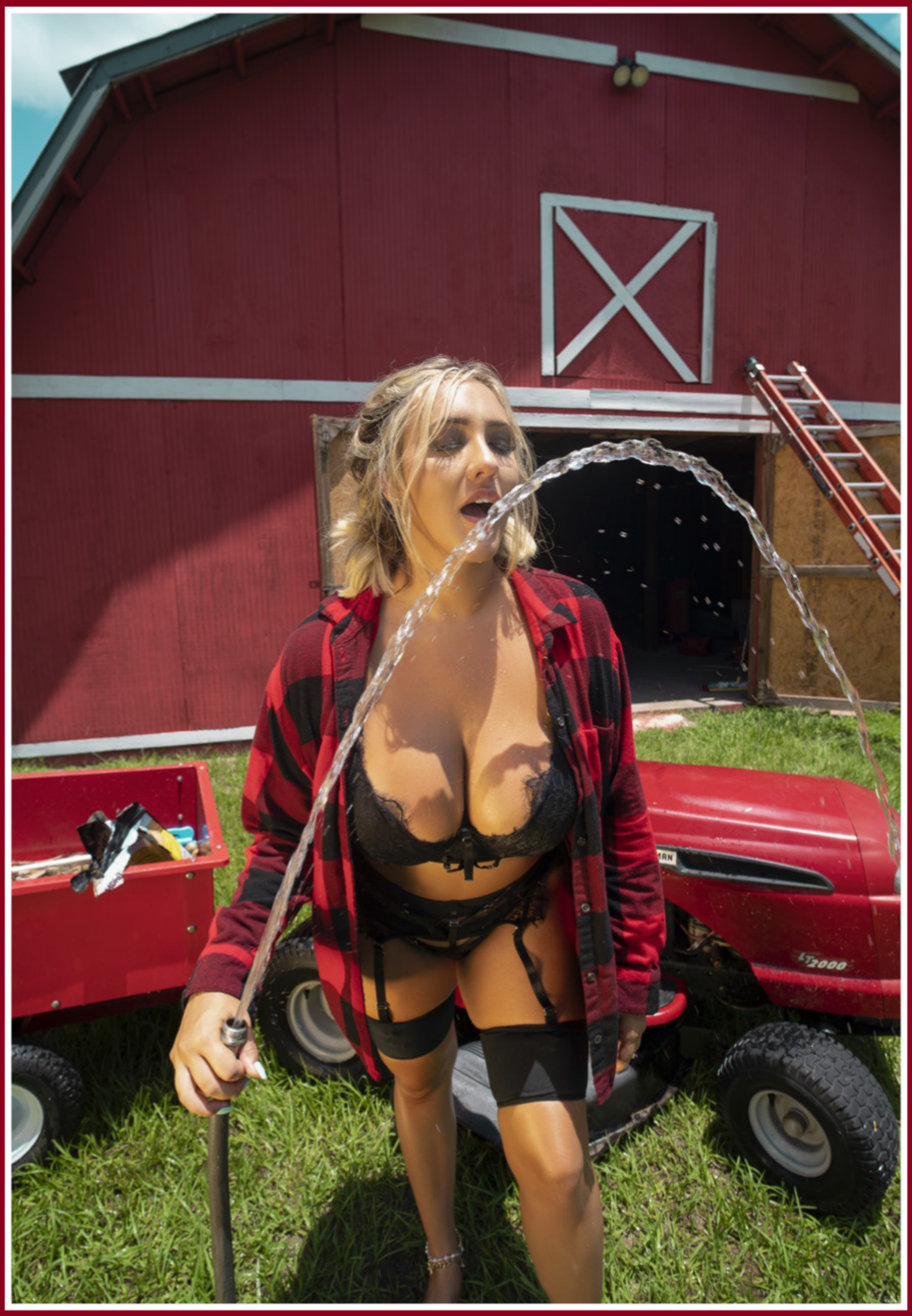
Never have I ever... that's tough! I'm pretty wild, but never have I ever sang karaoke on stage.

Top 3 myth busters when it comes to models? Number 1, not all of us are superficial, my girlfriends in the industry are the most fun and genuine people in my circle. Number 2, we do this for attention. Having a banging body is something you should take pride in, it takes a lot of dedication, and we literally get paid for that, it's not something done for attention, it's for the big bucks. Number 3, because I'm a model means I'm a bad mom. I'm an even better mom because I'm a model, it means I'm tough, determined, and strong because I have to deal with millions of Karen's opinions on something they could never do and have dinner on the table daily.

What is the best way to approach you as an admirer? Just come say hi and snap a photo with me! I love getting to know y'all!

Where can our readers catch up with you and stay updated with your work? Twitter @saracheeky1, @thesaracheeky on TikTok, Instagram, my website, and of course my OnlyFans!

We are so happy to have gotten to know you a little bit! Any last words out there for our readers? It is never too late to chase your dreams! And Go Vols!



TITANIC & ME

my iceberg conscience

By Ian Kirke | Twitter @ianjkirke

Cutting a solitary figure, standing at the very edge of the now decommissioned dock in Belfast where the then-largest movable structure on Earth ever built was launched one-hundred and nine years earlier, and over half a century before I was born, I looked as far out to sea as I possibly could. My isolation, aided by the chill in the air and the winter breeze made me confront a question I needed an answer to. Why was there such a tangible connection between me, a ship, and a tragic event of such epic proportions that the utterance of its name still epitomizes great loss? Whilst I was totally overwhelmed by the wonder of human endeavor and ingenuity, I instinctively knew that this alone did not fully capture the hold this moment in history had on me ever since I care to remember.

The scale of achievement was herculean - 882.75 feet long, 46,000 tons, three massive propellers, the largest two as long as a London bus, able to carry 2,500 passengers and 860 crew. And 16 watertight compartments. Those famous safety mechanisms that led to the claim that the Titanic was unsinkable. Why anyone would ever deduce that such a mass of iron, however, constructed, was impervious to the often-cruel nature of the sea only added to my fascination with the story. Shipbuilders Harland and Wolff never made this absurd claim although subsequent reports in the media, especially the Irish News, gave credibility to the enduring myth. Even when the pride of the White Star Line was at the bottom of the Atlantic Ocean with 1,157 lives lost company Vice President P.A.S. Franklin announced, on first hearing that the Titanic was in trouble - "We place absolute confidence in the Titanic. We believe the boat is unsinkable." The opulence of first-class passengers contrasted the struggles of the third-class ticket holders. Titanic was a microcosm of Great Britain at the turn of the twentieth century.

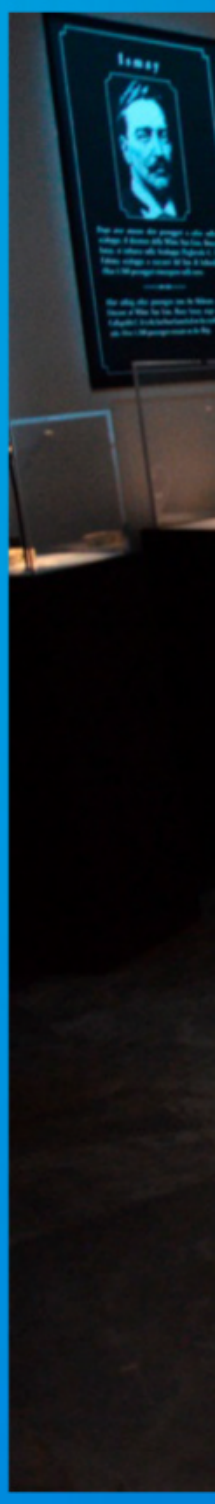
As I retired to the Titanic Hotel, a short walk away, originally the drawing offices of the shipbuilders the realization of the hold the Royal Mail Ship Titanic had upon me began to crystalize. The story of Titanic was the cry from the crow's nest that heralded the awakening of my consciousness. The very core beliefs, values and principles that made me, me. As a kid I had often asked myself the question, "What is it like to be me?" What was my substance? At this tender age the answer was understandably elusive since I had only just begun my life journey. Yet many decades later in the beautiful city of Belfast I felt a rising confidence in my ability to answer this paradoxical question.

I was born in Nottingham, and for the first five years of my life lived in Stapleford, a solid working-class suburb of the East Midlands City, with a rich industrial pedigree. Famous for lace-making in the nineteenth century and latterly coal mining, which at my birth had around thirty active collieries. On moving to Bicester in Oxfordshire my family remained in council housing. It wasn't until I was at secondary school that my parents bought their first home. Today I am privileged to own a house a few miles from the royal residence, Windsor Castle. I have metaphorically climbed the stairs from steerage to first class. Yet my humble roots will preclude me from ever taking advantage of others. Climbing on the backs of those less fortunate. Discrimination, unfairness, and bullying will always be my lifelong foes.

As a police officer, I reached a point in my career when I thought I was unsinkable. With rank on my shoulders at a relatively young age and earmarked for future stardom my ego had become colossal. I hit my own personal iceberg and sank. Yet the striking Titanic visitor center, synthesizing the shape of four hulls and eerily, to me at least, an iceberg, provided the metaphor I was looking for since it too represents how humanity has the intrinsic ability to deal with heartache and bounce back - just as I did.

And those that perished? The incredible feeling of loss. The unfairness, harshness, and clinical entrance that death can make, often without warning, spoke directly to my own life experiences.

On my journey out of steerage, I became a mature student and obtained a qualifying law degree and latterly a master's in criminology and criminal psychology. This seven-year

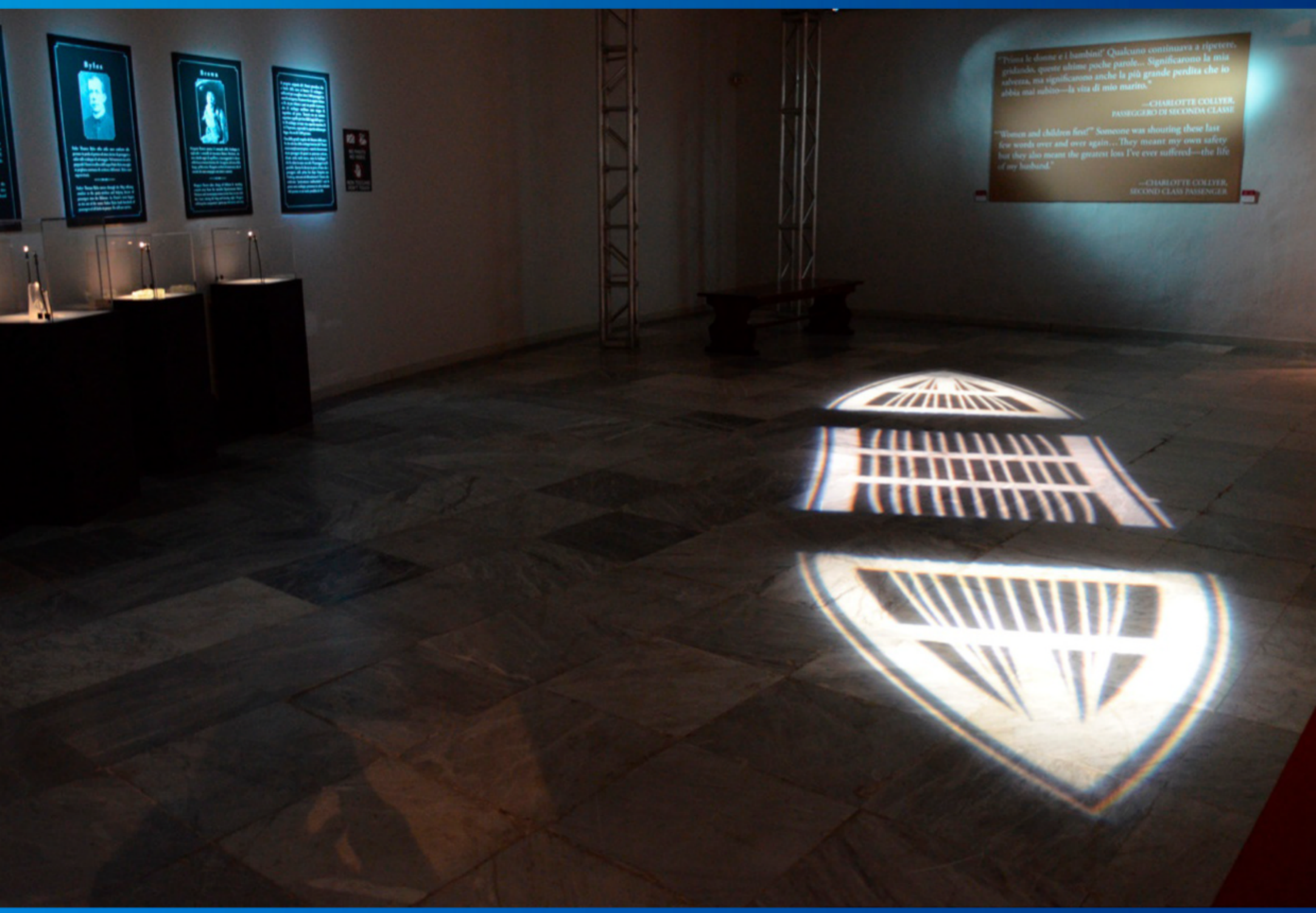


voyage, whilst being a dad to two schoolchildren and holding down a full-time job, led me to the port of critical thinking – a skill that has enabled me to follow my dreams rather than be beholden to a boss. But perhaps as importantly not to be fooled by snake oil salesmen who peddle persuasive and putrid lies. Fake news has become synonymous with our daily digital digest. Once only the few would be fooled yet today whole communities and, in the most perverse of situations, whole nations can be duped by a handful of rhetoric. 'Take back control,' 'Make America Great Again,' 'Unsinkable'. Peel back the glitz folks and you may discover the clear fault lines.

Being different, perhaps on occasions a little brash, whilst hiding my insecurities below deck, chimed so incredibly with a little-known fact that I had picked up on my many visits to other Titanic exhibitions from London to Orlando and Las Vegas. The four magnificent funnels which overtly reflected the magnificence of Titanic hid a falsehood. The fourth one was there for purely aesthetic reasons. The fake funnel was used to ventilate the engine room as well as evacuating fumes from the first-class smoking room. This piece of Titanic trivia always made me smile and I would often point out the inaccuracies of prints that portrayed each stack oozing the same amount of smoke.

As I lay in bed that night, scrolling through the photographs I had taken earlier in the day I eventually got it. The story of Titanic is the tapestry of my life.

What's your story?



Julie

In some pub in Farnham, Surrey in 1983 my life changed forever when I fell in love for the first time. I have only truly fallen in love three times in my entire life.

I clapped eyes on a shy-looking girl at a work reunion and she literally stole my heart. Although I had just joined the police and was meant to be comfortably assured, I couldn't summon the confidence to even speak to her. I just didn't want her to say no.

By Ian Kirke | Twitter @ianjkirke

A few days later, with her firmly on my mind every waking hour of the day I called her at work. I recall having to practice my opening line repeatedly since I didn't want to come across as some sort of weirdo. Even repetition didn't excuse my clumsy ice breaker – "Hi Julie, it's Ian, the guy who came to your work do. I was wearing the brown leather jacket." There was a silence that seemed to last an eternity, broken by the news that she did remember me. I asked her out, she accepted, and my heartbeat recorded a newly elevated status.

I often joked about her being a cheap date as she would always prefer a cup of coffee to alcohol, even when we went to the pub.
We dated for a while and one night in Mayrhofen, Austria two naive lovers went to bed and awoke much wiser.
She recognized her dream of becoming a nurse and we managed to practice our new skills in a single bed in the cramped nursing quarters. A cop and a nurse seemed the ideal match. I got on brilliantly with her parents, her older sister, and younger brother who frequently asked me about my life in the police.
Then I fell in love for only the second time with my future wife, Theresa, and mother of Lucy and Adam, and I completed a task that I have never undertaken since. I told someone that I had previously fallen in love with that it was over.

Throughout the ensuing years I often thought about Julie and once or twice tried to locate her, without success, on social media. I guessed that she had married and moved on. When Ali G spoke about 'Me Julie' I smiled broadly and wondered how life had panned out for my Julie.

Thirty-six years later I met a guy in Aldershot, Hampshire with the same surname as Julie. He appeared to be slightly younger than me with a warm and caring personality. I so wanted him to be Julie's brother. The circumstantial evidence was compelling – location, forename and surname, age, disposition, and occupation. He was in the medical profession too.
As before, I couldn't muster the courage to ask but I knew I had to.
Excited I asked if he had a sister called Julie who once worked in the civil service in Farnham. He looked a little confused, then I immediately remembered that her time in this job was only temporary. "She was a nurse too!"
His reply altered my heartbeat again.
"I had a sister called Julie."
The word 'had' hung in the air like the darkest of all dark matters. Please don't be her brother. Please let this be another Julie.
Her brother did remember me – "You are the policeman!" From behind his mask, I figured that he was smiling since his previously sad eyes momentarily sparkled.
The punch to my stomach when he confirmed that he was my Julie's brother was as real as if someone had physically struck me.
Julie married, had two children, later divorced and remarried, and died last year after developing breast cancer.
I don't need to know where she rests, nor will I perform some symbolic lighting of a candle since she is still alive in my heart and her face will be forever etched in my mind.
I'm glad the shy guy in the leather flying jacket eventually made that call and equally thankful that the similarly coy girl said yes.
I just wish we could have had one more coffee together.

THE ORIGINAL STEAMPUNK

The story of Gabe Newell

Throughout the age of PC games, there have been numerous pioneers that have changed the PG gaming landscape, turning it into the massive gaming scene we have today. But very few have had the impact than Gabe Logan Newell. This gaming fanatic and varsity dropout went on to create arguably the biggest platform for PC gamers and helped create some of the most influential games ever. So how did this mild-mannered programmer from California become the savior of PC gaming?

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Throughout the age of PC games, there have been numerous pioneers that have changed the PG gaming landscape, turning it into the massive gaming scene we have today. But very few have had the impact than Gabe Logan Newell. This gaming fanatic and varsity dropout went on to create arguably the biggest platform for PC gamers and helped create some of the most influential games ever. So how did this mild-mannered programmer from California become the savior of PC gaming?

Varsity Blues to Freeman

Born in 1962, Gabe Newell showed an early interest in technology and the promise of what computers can do. Throughout his time at Davis Senior High School in Davis, California, Newell had dreams of doing something unique in the world of computers and the best place for him to reach his dreams, at least that's what he thought, was the highly acclaimed Harvard University. Newell excelled in High School and easily got accepted into Harvard in 1980. However, he soon realized that Varsity life was not all it was cracked up to be, feeling frustrated with his classes and his lecturers, Newell went to visit his brother who started work at an up-and-coming software company called Microsoft. In 2013 Newell told the story of how Steve Balmer unconventionally convinced him to join the company in an interview with students through Google Hangouts provided by Code.org, Newell said *"The most valuable educational experience for me was sort of the nontraditional one. I was going to university and went out to visit my brother – he just started at this new software company, which was the third-largest software company on the east side of Lake Washington, and I was going out to visit him, and all of a sudden he was working all the time. So rather than hanging out with me and seeing the Space Needle, I was just hanging out with him at work. Steve Ballmer got mad that I was distracting him and said, 'Well, if you're going to be spending all your time hanging out here, you need to do something useful."*

It was an easy decision for Newell and much to the disappointment of his professors Newell dropped out of Harvard. When he met up with his Microsoft colleagues, Newell quickly realized he made the right choice. Newell continues in his student interview *"Those first three months when I was working with people like Tom Corbett and Neil Konzen and Steve Wood, was probably the most intense and valuable educational experience I've ever had. They sort of showed me how to be a professional software developer, you know, [so] it was an incredibly vast and really significant set of lessons that I learned. I learned more in three months with those guys at Microsoft than I did the entire time I was at Harvard." He added, "In Harvard, I learned how to drink beer while doing a handstand in the snow. Which, ya know,*

is a useful skill – but not nearly as useful as how to actually develop software."

Newell would go on to work at Microsoft for 13 years, being instrumental in developing the first 3 versions of Windows and helping create the giant that Microsoft is today. Yet his true passion was with gaming, after being blown away by 1993 first-person shooter Doom, a game he would go on to help port for the Windows 95 platform, a port that is still credited to this day as making Windows a viable gaming platform. The work on that port just added fuel to Newell's gaming fire and when close colleague Michael Abrash left Microsoft to join ID Software, creators of Doom and the upcoming Quake, Newell felt his time to create video games was around the corner and after 13 years at Microsoft, Gabe Newell would resign alongside friend and colleague Mike Harrington to start their own video game company named Valve Corporation.

The Valve Revolution

Valve quickly showed off that it wasn't messing around, as the first game it would ever release was the seminal Half-Life. This game changed the first-person landscape forever, from its unique design to the clever way it told its story in game instead of cutscenes which was popular at the time. Half-Life would go on to win numerous awards, including several Game of Year awards. Within 2 years of existing, Valve was seen as a major player in the PG gaming scene. Yet Newell would have more up his sleeve with the Half-Life franchise. After the success of Half-Life, Valve wanted to expand their multiplayer system. For this purpose, they began releasing game mods (modifications that users can apply to games to alter gaming operations according to their needs). This became a huge hit among gamers as it gave them the liberty to mold their gaming experience. Because of the overwhelming response that mods generated, Valve released more for Half-Life. The most popular was a little mod called Half-Life: Counter strike, which became a full-fledged independent game from a Counter Strike mod. Counter Strike would go on to be one of the biggest successes and even in 2022 still have a massive following for its online competitive scene. But it wasn't just the games and mods that made Valve such a success, it was the release of its own internal game engine called Source. Every single game ever released by Valve runs on some version of the highly customizable engine. They also released Source SDK, which attracted modders to Valve as moths to a flame. It had the potential to become a standard tool to create new features like maps, and game characters. Valve quickly established itself as one of the most gamer-friendly companies and the anticipation for the true sequel to Half-Life had gamers on the edge of their seats. Yet it would be Valve's next big release that truly shook the gaming world and it wasn't a game.

Valve was looking for a way to better update its published games as providing downloadable patches for multiplayer games resulted in most of the online user base disconnecting for several days until players had installed the patch. Valve decided to create a platform that would update games automatically and implement stronger anti-piracy and anti-cheat measures. Through user polls at the time of its announcement in 2002, Valve also recognized that at least 75% of their users had access to high-speed Internet connections, which would continue to grow with planned broadband expansion in the following years, and recognized that they could deliver game content faster to players than through retail channels. Valve approached several companies, including Microsoft, Yahoo!, and RealNetworks to build a client with these features, but were declined. However, this did now stop Newell and his dream for PC gaming. Steam would be publicly announced at the Game Developers Conference event on March 22, 2002, and released for beta testing the same day. Between 80,000 and 300,000 players participated in the beta test before Steam's official release on September 12, 2003. As with any new technology, there were numerous bugs and connection issues and many questioned if what Valve and Newell were pursuing was viable in the long term. Yet in 2004, Valve finally released Half-Life 2 to rave reviews across the board from critics and fans alike. However, Half-Life 2 could only be purchased and played through the Steam applications. This caused much frustration among gamers, yet elevated the Steam platform to new heights purely based on the brilliance that was Half-Life 2, a game that once again changed everything we knew about first-person shooters. Throughout the years Steam became the ultimate platform for PC gamers, with access to millions of titles from every single developer in the world. Once the bugs were sorted and the netcode fixed, Steam became the number one online distributor for PC games. As of 2022 Steam has over 27 million active users on its platform, and the number is constantly growing.

From a humble Windows developer to the father of modern PC gaming, Gabe Newell changed the landscape of gaming forever. Steam set a new standard in how gamers get access to their games and the Half-Life series changed the way people looked at first-person shooters. Newell became a billionaire thanks to following his passions and believing in his vision for gaming. It's hard to think of PC gaming today without the Steam Platform, and even though it had a rocky start and many detractors, Newell persisted and succeeded where many others would have backed down. It's also no surprise that Newell is seen as the lord and savior of the PC gaming scene and is beloved by many gamers around the world. Now if only Valve would release Half Life 3, then the world would be at peace once again. All hail Lord Gaben.

STEAM™

Karmen KARMA

Perfection

Model | @realkarmen
Photographer Ryan Dwyer | @letshoot
PR Services @mainstreetproductions
HMUA @taylor_jazz

Such an absolute honor to have you feature on FHM! What has your journey as a certified bombshell been like so far? It has been a long journey— and definitely not a boring one! I have been extremely lucky that I've gotten to do what I love for a living while working for myself. I constantly stay motivated always trying to get to the next level... and I suppose that determination has gotten me here!

We are blown away by your drive and professionalism, can you tell us what some of the things that motivate you to stay on top of your game are? By nature, I've always been a very competitive person- even with myself! When I reach one goal, I'm never satisfied, I'm always looking to get to the next level. I'm definitely a workaholic. There are so many things I can do in my career and I want to explore them all.

Top 3 best moments of your career? This magazine cover definitely makes it to my top 3! Writing and publishing my memoir, "Overcome" about my entire life story was something I was very proud of myself for. Lastly, when I become a self-made millionaire from doing what I love... That had to be the best moment of my career so far!

What is your favorite chill time activity? A hot coconut oil bubble bath surrounded by candles and my favorite Netflix show!

We are taking you out on your ultimate date and we really want to knock this one out of the ballpark, what would that entail? Take me to a vegan restaurant- not an expensive fancy place but somewhere I can order as many appetizers as I desire and pig out with you... then something exciting like ax throwing or to a rage room so you can see how crazy things will get if you decide to date me.

What are, hands down, your absolute favorite things to do? Getting a good workout in, watching stand-up comedy in bed with snacks, and creating magic with other content creators!

3 ultimate deal-breakers when it comes to men? Bad breath, bad attitude.

You have one last chance to do something you have always wanted to do, with no limits on anything, what are you doing? Leave all of my responsibilities behind to travel the world without social media to live in the moment.

Where would you say is your favorite place to be in the world and why? Take me to a resort on the beach and I could stay there forever. The ultimate key to a good vacation is to keep my phone completely off. No work, no distractions, just complete relaxation!

What is currently playing on loop on your playlist? I am always playing Gucci Mane, Young Dolph and Megan Thee Stallion.

Where can our readers catch up with you and stay updated with your work? I'm super active with my fans on Instagram @realkarmen, Twitter @karmenkarma, and Youtube @karmenkarmavlogs.

We are so happy to have gotten to know you a little bit! Any last words out there for our readers? Be on the lookout for my crazy YouTube videos coming soon if you want to be entertained!

PIRELLI

BACK ON SCRIPT

Following some outlandish designs, BMW's latest X3 restores order

Here's a car (sorry SUV) that needs no introduction and never struggles to explain its existence in the market space every time BMW's accountants walk in and whip out their calculators.

Month on month the X3 delivers with solid sales and enters any conversation that ties the words premium with SUV.

Yet despite cementing itself on our roads, competitors from Korea, and recently China, have clawed back some ground by offering more gadgets at a lower price. However, it's a fight that BMW seems to be ready for.

What's new

We bemoan the fact that grilles have become such a polarising discussion every time BMW brings out a new model, but fortunately, the X3's nose is nicely balanced with the other cosmetic upgrades.

This is not a model that BMW's designers could take many risks with– that adventurous spirit is left up to models like the iX and M4. This styling needed to carry a cohesive, broader appeal rather than grab attention through pure shock value.

With that steady framework in mind with enough mental grab handles to find one's way around; the X3 is perhaps one of BMW's most resolved products.

It's smart, and unoffensive while sweeping light clusters keep everything taut and sleek. Revised bumpers, stylish alloys and if you look a little closer, myriad cameras and sensors hint at an extremely digitized cabin.

Engines

Even more sensible decisions continue under the hood with a 2.0-liter 4-cylinder turbo diesel devoid of any hybrid system. On the surface, such a powertrain might almost sound old-fashioned, especially since Europe has been a vocal opponent of diesel engines, but the more time you spend with this engine, the less you start to miss anything related to hybrid.

It's wonderfully economical, has a tidal wave of torque to carry you over hills and because it's paired to a meaty gearbox, it can also do a good job of acting sporty. There's something about it being the intelligent choice, an all-roundedness that does the daily chores and then very subtly adds a layer of driving enjoyment with BMW's all-wheel-drive xDrive waiting for road conditions to worsen.

Handling

Remembering that the X3's body can be packed with a variety of flavours of M including the magnum-opus twin-turbo X3 M, and you'll quickly understand how BMW is trying to differentiate its SUV from some of the other run-of-the-mill softer offerings. Even in the base 2.0-liter guise, there are still traces of an SUV that has been reinforced and stiffened. It has an attacking edge which feels sharper at low speed and then settles into a better fluency as you go up through the gears. However, on bumpier suburban surfaces, you do notice your body shuffling around in the seat caused by the immediacy and accuracy of the feedback coming through the suspension. I couldn't decide if I liked it. At times I was quietly pleased that BMW had somehow kept

all the driving nous that made the 3 Series stand head and shoulders apart from the competition, but there will be many others who find the X3's chassis slightly unforgiving. Nevertheless, it feels meaty with deliberate responses and the way it commits itself to any turn is something rival products still can't match with the same confidence.
All the controls feel nicely dampened and weighted – not because they needed to be, but because it feels safer and soaks up any rattles and silences wind noise. It's just such a well-insulated product that feels like it can drive through a hurricane and come out the other side unscathed.

Technology

Our test unit struck a wise balance between specification and blowing the budget. By ignoring the tempting array of autonomous features, the base price has increased. The iDrive system and steering controls still deliver the most accurate inputs and the solid feedback and shortcut buttons make the X3 an easy car to live with and one that doesn't require more than one attempt to enter the right input.

We also played around with BMW's voice command which now has a slightly more human-like vocabulary and feels a little sharper and to the point. We asked it everything from weather forecasts, to tire pressures, to change the temperature and when we mentioned our boredom, it sympathized and suggested Sport mode. Dual digital clusters are now standard while wireless Android Auto or IOS is also a massive convenience and keeps the number of cables to a minimum.

Verdict

Few SUVs feel as alive on the road as the X3 does. It fills multiple personalities of being sporty and sensible, plush and practical, all at the same time and it proves that BMW still knows how to deliver an outstanding chassis, even if it's now a few feet further away from the ground. You appreciate the little extra bit of engineering that has been poured into every thinkable gap and if you like an SUV that still drives like a sporty sedan, it's hard to find a better alternative.

Pawan Dhingara

PUMP AND PLUG ACTION

McLaren's revolutionary new drivetrain is a sign of things to come

It's probably just a big, fat coincidence that McLaren launched its new hybrid supercar smack bang in the middle of one of the world's steepest petrol price increases. Hybrid supercars are simply not designed to spare their owners from rising fuel bills, after all. Instead, they're about smoothing over emission regulations, finding that extra little lick of performance, and developing systems that can be transferred to the race track. Start saying your prayers Lando Norris and Daniel Ricciardo...

McLaren is a company renowned for steady evolution of its models, but the new Artura truly breaks the mold, even if at first glance it looks a touch underwhelming, comparable in so many ways to everything that has defined McLaren's Sports Series over the years. It's positioned as the entry-level hybrid McLaren and something of a riposte to the Ferrari 296 GTB.

Like the Ferrari, the Artura scales down its powertrain to a 3.0-liter V6 with a pair of turbochargers tucked inside. This is joined by a hybrid system, mounted low and by the bulkhead, whose purpose is to make sure your neck muscles can't tell the difference from McLaren's ubiquitous 4.0-liter V8. The gearbox also gets an extra gear, taking it up to eight in total.

McLaren's aren't all about eye-popping power, but the Artura does have an element of that. The 94bhp, 166lb-ft, 15.4kg electric motor sources its power from a 7.4kWh battery pack while the V6 manages its own 577bhp and 431lb-ft.

Some quick maths later and the Artura's powertrain adds up to totals of 671bhp and 531lb-ft. It's not quite a match for the Ferrari, 296 GTB, but then again it is a fair bit cheaper and has doors that swing upwards.

With the hybrid system working in perfect synchronization with the engine, the Artura's rear tires receive power instantly. With all the sportiest driving mode grabbing power from every corner of the drivetrain, the Artura can do 0-60m/h in 3.0 seconds and 0-120 in 8.3 seconds. It has also been designed to feel stable at high speeds.

McLaren has once again obsessed over its carbon-fiber tub, and with the hybrid system adding its own weight, new attempts had to be made to put carbon fiber design on a diet. The end result is a plug-in supercar that weighs about as much as a medium-sized hatchback. One thing that separates the Artura from the handful of other hybrid supercars is that the regenerative braking has intentionally been deleted from the Artura's extensive list of technologies – according to McLaren is the enemy of brake feel. Instead, the engine feeds some power back into the battery and an overnight charge is recommended if you want to get the full 15 miles of silent, battery-power, mobility.

The Artura has a familiar, clinical set of movements and any weight penalty that may have occurred from the hybrid system is cleverly disguised by the advanced carbon packaging. It also introduces a new recipe to the McLaren repertoire that will underpin innumerable new models, including the upcoming 720S. We know there's a lot more still to come from the powertrain and its electric wizardry but for now, it feels like McLaren has caught the EV supercar wave at just the right point.

Pawan Dhingara

BLAST FROM THE PAST

Supra Shifts Into Another Gear with Addition of Manual Gearbox

Japanese sportscars are mutating and evolving. Last month we brought you news on Nissan's new Z car and while that reveal was baked in nostalgia, across the Indian ocean, Toyota was one step ahead with an update to its current generation Supra. Maybe that should be an update of an update, because the new Supra has already been with us for a few years.

Clearly inspired by Nissan's new Z which comes with the option of a manual gearbox, Toyota now offers the same choice with the Supra. Besides the obvious good news for enthusiasts who get hooked on the nuances of control, the availability of a manual gearbox will provide another crucial distinction between the Supra and the Z4. The other being that the Z4 is a convertible whereas the Supra has a fixed roof. In very broad terms, the Supra is now undoubtedly the driver's choice whereas the Z4 is pitched towards cruising.

Sounds like simple gearbox surgery, but a car designed from the ground up for an automatic gearbox has some ergonomic hurdles that don't quite merge with a manual shifter. For instance, a tight cockpit doesn't allow for easy travel through the gates so everything had to be moved back a touch to make sure that drivers didn't end up punching the dashboard. Everything else moved with it, including the iDrive controller but our brain was so saturated by the unfamiliar third pedal in the footwell that these subtle differences went by unnoticed.

Whereas the automatic gearbox is a copy and paste from the Z4, the manual version uses the same supplier but has spent a lot of time trying myriad weights and linkages. We're talking gram-by-gram perfection here, the sort of detail that a bona fide race car team might fuss over. In the manual, you get six forward shifts, two less than the auto, but it doesn't feel like the Supra ever runs out of legs at the top end, and feels just as punchy down low. It's slower of course due to the time lost in the action of the clutch and the gear lever but the vivid involvement makes up for it.

Additonal changes have been inserted in and around the car's suspension. Revised rubbers with matching calibration of the dampers is a difference you can feel, especially now that Toyota's engineers have given the steering a more analog feel. These changes have a profound effect on the way the car drives. The Supra was also a comfortable sportscar, but now there is more fidelity behind the actions.

Less complexity in the gearbox also results in less overall weight. Once the new wheels have been bolted to each corner and the Supra rolls onto the scales, there's nearly 40 kilograms to the good.

Time will tell if anyone actually buys a manual Supra. History tells us that the vocal demand and internet forum chatter doesn't often translate into actual sales. Everybody likes the idea but the usability of an auto is hard just too hard to ignore. We think it's more of a reaction to the Nissan Z, to ensure that Toyota doesn't lose customers to its arch-nemesis.
Pawan Dhingara

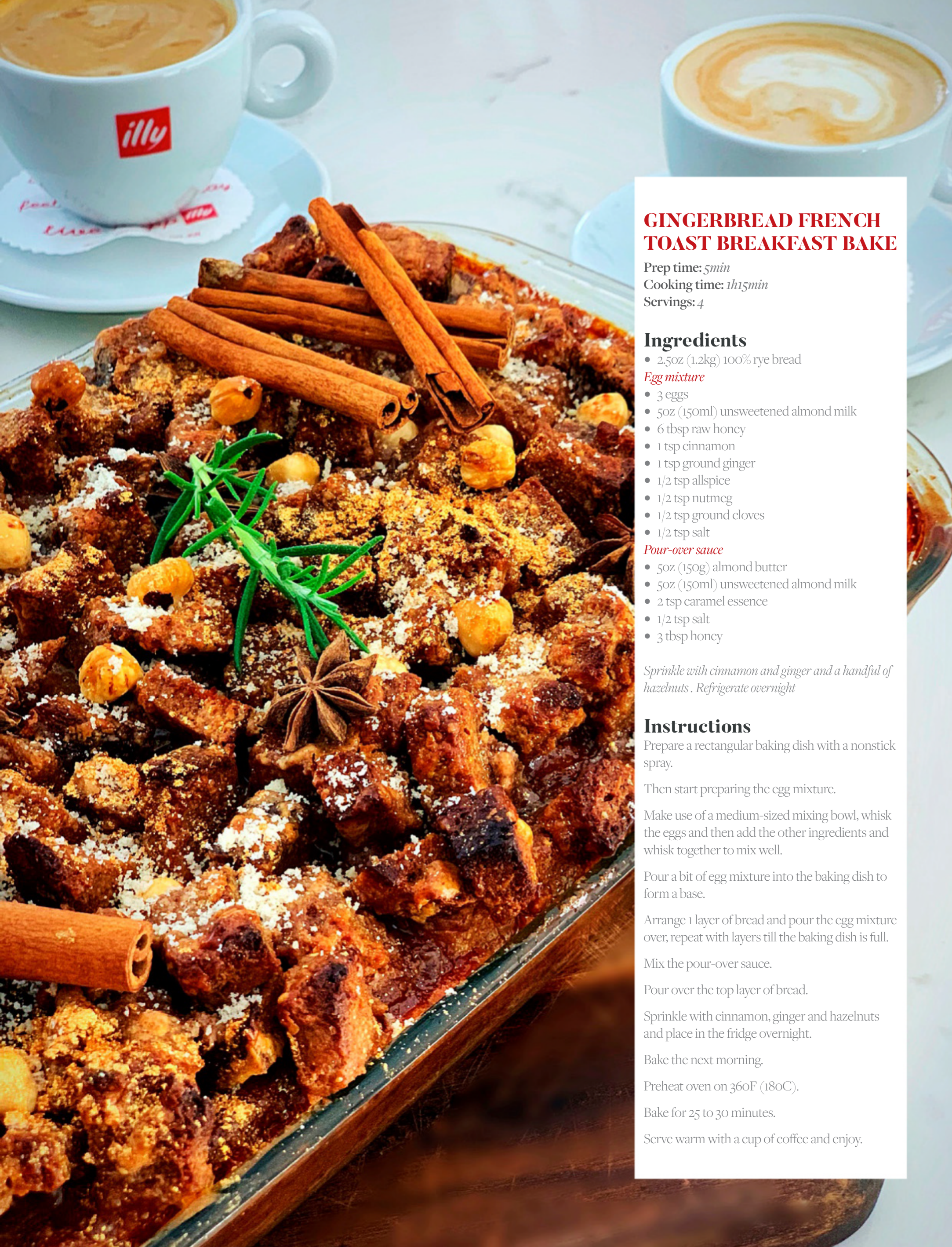
Bake Like A BOSS!

It may seem like a cliche stereotype, but it doesn't seem like too many men actually know their way around the oven. Interestingly enough, the art of baking is a lot cooler than you'd think. Imagine it. Preparing your own biscuits, cakes, or even bread and a variety of other pastries - on demand. If that isn't self-sufficient then we don't know what is.

It's for that reason, and a few others, that we decided to brush up on our baking game, so get ready to get on that apron as we improve your kitchen skills with some expertly put together (and delicious) baking recipes.

There's nothing wrong with a man that cooks, actually, in this day and age women seem to love it. But if you're the kind of man that can bake too, then don't be surprised if your partner considers you a keeper!

Besides, baking tasty treats has many benefits for yourself also, like saving money and being able to make your own late-night deli snacks - whenever you want to!



GINGERBREAD FRENCH TOAST BREAKFAST BAKE

Prep time: *5min*
Cooking time: *1h15min*
Servings: *4*

Ingredients

- 2.5oz (1.2kg) 100% rye bread

Egg mixture

- 3 eggs
- 5oz (150ml) unsweetened almond milk
- 6 tbsp raw honey
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- 1 tsp ground ginger
- 1/2 tsp allspice
- 1/2 tsp nutmeg
- 1/2 tsp ground cloves
- 1/2 tsp salt

Pour-over sauce

- 5oz (150g) almond butter
- 5oz (150ml) unsweetened almond milk
- 2 tsp caramel essence
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 3 tbsp honey

Sprinkle with cinnamon and ginger and a handful of hazelnuts . Refrigerate overnight

Instructions

Prepare a rectangular baking dish with a nonstick spray.

Then start preparing the egg mixture.

Make use of a medium-sized mixing bowl, whisk the eggs and then add the other ingredients and whisk together to mix well.

Pour a bit of egg mixture into the baking dish to form a base.

Arrange 1 layer of bread and pour the egg mixture over, repeat with layers till the baking dish is full.

Mix the pour-over sauce.

Pour over the top layer of bread.

Sprinkle with cinnamon, ginger and hazelnuts and place in the fridge overnight.

Bake the next morning.

Preheat oven on 360F (180C).

Bake for 25 to 30 minutes.

Serve warm with a cup of coffee and enjoy.

QUICK AND EASY GINGER BISCUITS - DOGGY STYLE

Prep time: *10min*
Cooking time: *8min*
Servings: *30-32*

Ingredients

- 10oz (300g) almond flour
- 10oz (300g) tapioca flour (cassava flour)
- 1.5oz (50g) tahini
- 2 tsp bicarb of soda
- 2 tsp cinnamon
- 4 tsp ground ginger
- 1 tsp cloves
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp vanilla essence
- 2 tbsp blackstrap molasses
- 4 tbsp raw honey
- 1 tbsp apple cider vinegar
- 4oz (120ml) olive oil
- 1 egg whisked

Instructions

Preheat oven to 430F (220C).

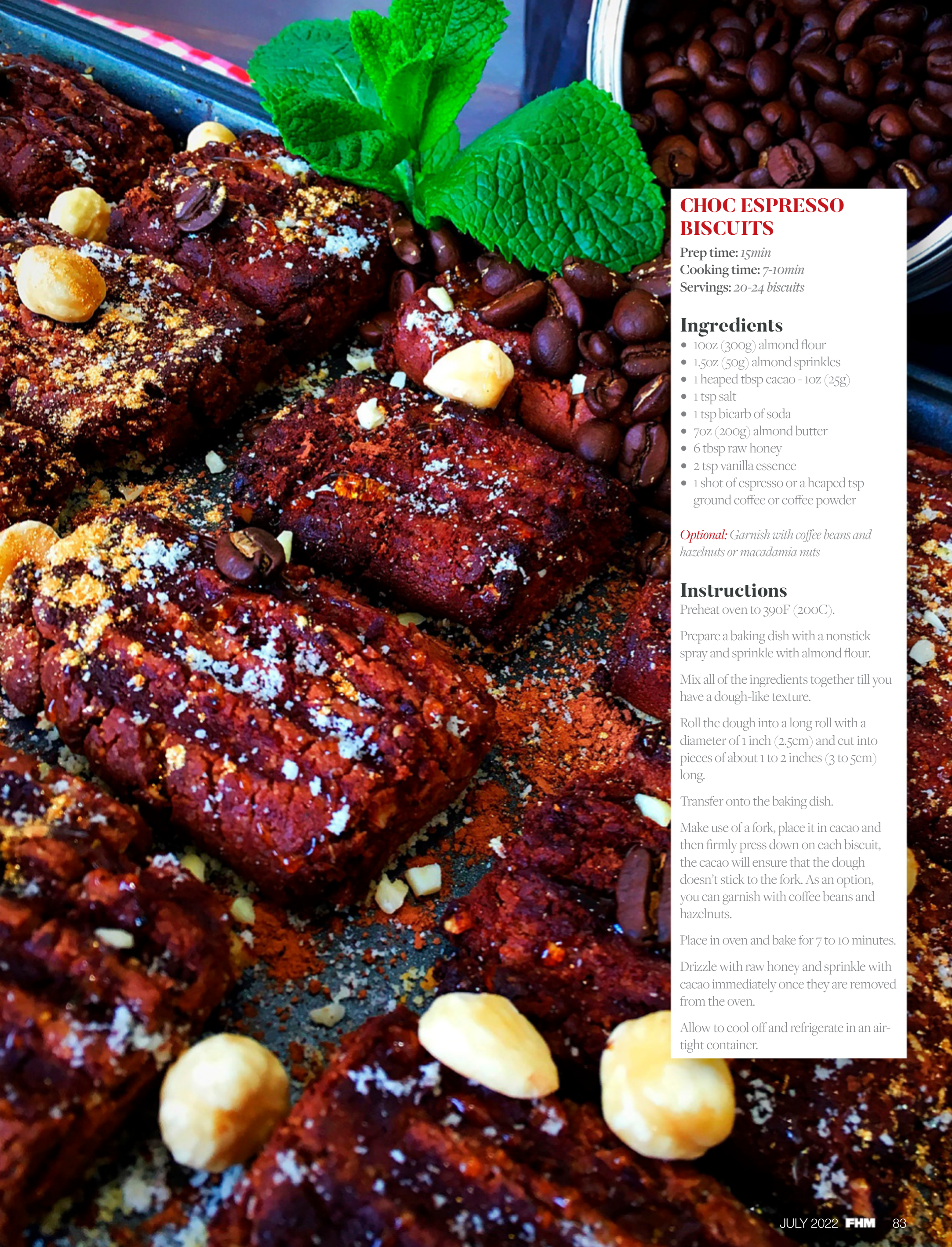
Line a baking tray with parchment paper.

Mix all the ingredients together except for the egg, beat it separate before adding to the mix.

Mix and knead well till you have a firm cookie dough.

Roll dough out and cut into shapes with cookie cutters.

Bake for 8 to 10 minutes.



CHOC ESPRESSO BISCUITS

Prep time: *15min*
Cooking time: *7-10min*
Servings: *20-24 biscuits*

Ingredients

- 10oz (300g) almond flour
- 1.5oz (50g) almond sprinkles
- 1 heaped tbsp cacao - 1oz (25g)
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp bicarb of soda
- 7oz (200g) almond butter
- 6 tbsp raw honey
- 2 tsp vanilla essence
- 1 shot of espresso or a heaped tsp ground coffee or coffee powder

Optional: Garnish with coffee beans and hazelnuts or macadamia nuts

Instructions

Preheat oven to 390F (200C).

Prepare a baking dish with a nonstick spray and sprinkle with almond flour.

Mix all of the ingredients together till you have a dough-like texture.

Roll the dough into a long roll with a diameter of 1 inch (2.5cm) and cut into pieces of about 1 to 2 inches (3 to 5cm) long.

Transfer onto the baking dish.

Make use of a fork, place it in cacao and then firmly press down on each biscuit, the cacao will ensure that the dough doesn't stick to the fork. As an option, you can garnish with coffee beans and hazelnuts.

Place in oven and bake for 7 to 10 minutes.

Drizzle with raw honey and sprinkle with cacao immediately once they are removed from the oven.

Allow to cool off and refrigerate in an air-tight container.

MOCHA HAZELNUT MUFFINS

Prep time: *10min*
Cooking time: *25min*
Servings: *12 muffins*

Ingredients

- 2 cans chickpeas drained
- 8 tbs raw honey
- 3oz (100g) almond butter
- 1 tsp vanilla essence
- 2 tsp caramel essence
- 1 tsp bicarb of soda
- 2 eggs
- 1.5oz (50g) almond flour
- 1ts of salt
- 1 heaped tablespoon of cacao (preferably raw)
- 1 shot of espresso or a heaped tsp ground coffee or coffee powder
- 3oz (100g) hazelnuts

Instructions

Preheat oven to 360F (180C) on thermo-fan.

Place the chickpeas in the bowl of a food processor.

Blend till smooth.

Add all the other ingredients except the eggs and hazelnuts and process on high for 3 to 5 minutes, scraping down sides as needed, until mixture is smooth and well blended.

If you don't have a food processor you can pulp the chickpeas with a blender, add the rest of the ingredients and beat with an electric beater for 2 minutes on high speed.

Beat the eggs in a separate bowl till light and fluffy.

Add to the chickpea mix and beat for another 30 seconds to mix well.

Add the hazelnuts and fold into the mixture.

Scoop the mix evenly into 12 muffin cups.

Finish off with 2 to 3 hazelnuts per muffin, and coffee beans if you would like.

Drizzle with honey and sprinkle with almond flour for that fresh from the deli look.

Bake for 15 to 20 minutes.
(The edges will be crispy and firm to the touch while the centre will remain moist and soft.)

CHOCOLATE PEAR CRUMBLE

Prep time: *10min*
Cooking time: *25-30min*
Servings: *1 large tart*

Ingredients

Crust

- 8oz (250g) almond flour
- 2 tbsp honey
- 1 tbsp water
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 heaped tsp cacao
- 1 tsp caramel essence
- 3 cans of pear halves (in lite fruit juice) drained and washed to remove all fruit juice
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1 tbsp caramel Essence

For the crumble on top

- 4oz (120g) almond flour
- 1.5oz (50g) flaked almonds
- 1.5oz (50g) chopped dates
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1 tsp salt
- 3oz (100g) almond butter - melted
- 2 tbsp raw honey
- 1 tsp caramel essence
- 1 tsp vanilla essence
- 1 heaped tbsp cacao

Garnish: Use a thinly sliced pear, honey and cinnamon

Instructions

Preheat oven to 360F (180C).

Prepare a baking dish with nonstick spray.

In a large mixing bowl, mix all the crust ingredients together till it's a well-mixed and sticky crumb-like texture.

Transfer to a baking dish and form crust by distributing the mixture evenly and then pressing down firmly with your hands.

Set aside.

Drain and wash the pears.

Cut into smaller pieces with kitchen scissors or a knife and add the salt and caramel essence.

Mix well to make sure the caramel essence and salt are evenly distributed before transferring to the crust.

Then lastly the crumble.

Mix all of the ingredients together till it's a sticky crumb-like texture.

Cover the pears with the crumble.

Garnish with a thinly sliced pear, honey and cinnamon and place in the oven to bake for 25 to 30 minutes.

Ideal to serve warm or cold.

Dreamy

Lana Mae

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PR @ratnipproductions

DISCOVER YOUR NAUGHTY FANTASIES

SPICYMAGS.XYZ

SPICYMAGS.XYZ

UNLIMITED SATISFACTION
ONE LOW PRICE

Such an absolute honour to have you feature on FHM! What has your journey as a certified bombshell been like so far? What an honor it is to be here! I must say, it's very flattering to be revered as a certified bombshell! I have loved every moment of this journey so far because I have experienced so much growth and change. 2022 is the start of my North American tour as a traveling showgirl, and it is off to a great start indeed! I was always attracted to the glitz and glam of nightlife, so jeweled costumes and smoke machines really fuel my fire! I started putting shows together last year when training for a competition in Broussard, Louisiana! I used elements I learned from that experience and advice I received from other showgirls to elevate my performances, and let my personality really shine on stage. I love what I do because I bring sensuality, joy, and entertainment to people, without geography acting as a limitation! Social networking and media have undeniably revolutionized the way we connect within the nightclub industry, paving the way for my art to flourish and reach a much larger audience. I'm grateful to have the chance to share intimate experiences with even the readers of this magazine!

We are blown away by your drive and professionalism, can you tell us what some of the things that motivate you to stay on top of your game are? I'm very career driven. My loved ones sometimes tease me for being a bit of a workaholic, but my long-term goals demand discipline and diligence from me. I'm not dating anyone right now, and I think my solitude helps keep me focused. I have a lot of time to myself to think creatively and cover a lot of ground. I aim to meet small milestones every day that will help me get closer to the business model I have in my head. I am driven by my desire to inspire and teach others to do what they love and the preservation of decades worth of entertainment. I want my performances to honor the music that has brought us so much joy and move other dancers to celebrate music in the same way!

Top 3 best moments of your career? The best moments of my career thus far have been my favorite achievements! I was awarded a bronze medal for my very first competition, I gave my most Rockstar performance in Dieppe, Canada, and I debuted two completely different and fun new shows in Wellford, South Carolina. I also think there are many best moments of my career that have yet to come!

What is your favourite chill time activity? My favorite chill time activity is stretching! It feels so good sprawling out on the floor and getting a good stretch... gives me cat hair chills.

We are taking you out on your ultimate date and we really want to knock this one out the ballpark, what would that entail? I would be smitten if someone planned an activity for us to do! Whether it's cooking a meal together or riding dirt bikes, quality time where we forget about our phones is the best way to connect with me!

What are, hands down, your absolute favourite things to do? I absolutely love sitting with a good book, floating on a boat and fishing in the sun, dancing like nobody's watching, and having popcorn at the movie theater!

3 ultimate deal breakers when it comes to men? I believe a genuine man would never lie to, cheat on, or steal from me. I'd break a deal with anyone who didn't handle me with love and care!

You have one last chance to do something you have always wanted to do, with no limits on anything, what are you doing? I've always wanted to go skydiving!

Where would you say is your favourite place to be in the world and why? My favorite place to be in the world is snuggled in bed with my dog, Rico and my kitty, Tux.

What is currently playing on loop on your playlist? I can't stop listening to the new hit from Charlie Puth and Jungkook of BTS 'Left and Right'!

Where can our readers catch up with you and stay updated with your work? You can follow me on Instagram @lanamaewhereabouts and keep up with me on Twitter @lilmisslanamae! Be sure to check out my website lanamaexxx.com and chat one-on-one with me on Onlyfans Playmate Lana Mae [@lanamaexxx]!

We are so happy to have gotten to know you a little bit! Any last words out there for our readers? I just want to say thank you so much for reading! Life is short, get the tattoo!

that you
to die is the
know to avoid
thinking you
something to lose.
already naked.
is no reason not
follow your heart.
WARNING
CAUTION

EXPERTS SPEAK

How to scale your business into the millions & billions!

The pandemic is coming to an end, but businesses during it took a hard hit, no matter what industry they were in. As inflation continues to grow on products and services, business owners are needing to find creative ways to not lose money, but to instead scale forward and make massive profits.

FHM caught up exclusively with Los Silva, a man who works with brands and creators around the world to build, gain leads, systemize & scale their companies profitably to 7, 8 or 9 figures. With over 15 years of brand building and personal development coaching as well, Los has exited 2 major companies while investing 9 figures on advertising online. He believes that small businesses are the backbone of all countries, and his motto is "Impacts Over Effort" is one we dive deeper into as we get the proper tips on how to scale during this period of time in our society!

Why is it important to live your life through the "Impacts Over Effort" mindset? It's about living with intention. In work and often in life people go through the motions or use being busy as excuses for not having results. It's not about being busy, it's about making intentional impactful choices for yourself.

When should a person actually exit their company and look to sell? When they are the most excited about it! If you are bragging how good it's going it's time to sell.

What is the first thing you each do every morning as part of your routine for success? Wake up, go to the gym to get my body & mind right. Then cold linkage I have one in my house. Then drive to work. I always do hard things physically before the mentally hard things start at the office.

How important is social media to the success of a company? Crucial especially in this day and age. People buy people now and companies that succeed the most have faces as their spokesperson and create content have communities and conversations for better success. This is all driven by social.

What top 6 things can a person do to scale their business properly into 7, 8 and 9 figures? Mindset, strong key performance indicators, quarterly goals, strong leadership, a focused mission vision and culture, multiple ways to acquire customers, and a strong focus on social media.

How do you stay so grounded yourself after so much success? I am a dad. You can have all the success in the world but at home you're just a husband and a dad and I write in a gratitude journal daily.

What is something trend-wise in the world of business that people should be paying attention to right now if they aren't already? TikTok. Bigger companies are not using it fully. A stronger emphasis on building media teams or hiring media teams for more content distribution. You will see companies become media companies in the next few years.

How does a guy like yourself turn it off and just relax and vacation? I do a lot of family trips, usually to beach locations and stay-cations. I can't turn anything off at home. So I actively put myself in positions where me and my family don't need our phones so we are present.

How important is good health, proper routines, fitness and living with a healthy mindset mean to you in order to achieve the success you have? I think it's important overall. I have always had a huge passion for fitness. I think besides physical it does a lot for your mental health.

Can money buy love & happiness? No. It buys time. But only you can make yourself happy.

Anything else fun you'd like to add or include for our readers? Times like these are the best times in history to take advantage of buying, selling and building companies. I know they can seem difficult but they are opportunistic and I want people to think about that as they navigate these times.

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